

Bavarian News

Vol. 5, Nr. 24

U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt and Garmisch

December 9, 2009

HOHENFELS

REAL WORLD

Students obtain valuable work experience through Career Practicum

PAGE 11

GARMISCH

GOING POSTAL

To accommodate the holiday rush, the post office will remain open on Saturdays

PAGE 18

ANSBACH

WINTER WOES

With winter weather on the way, residents should be aware of their responsibilities

PAGE 20

SCHWEINFURT

A FAMILY AFFAIR

The term brothers-in-arms has a personal meaning for two redeployed Soldiers

PAGE 23



Check it out

For additional photos from community events, visit www.flickr.com/photos/usaggrafenwoehr/sets.

Christmas Markets

'Tis the season ... for shopping, hot cocoa and glühwein.

Don't miss the local Christkindlmaerkte in the surrounding communities.

See page 24 for a listing of recommended markets, large and small.

For markets in other communities, visit www.weihnachtsmarkt-deutschland.de/bayern.html.

What you're looking for

Opinion Editorial	2
News	3-8, 24
Spotlight on the NCO	4
Retiree Corner	8
What's Happening	12-13
Travel	15
Medical	16
Movies	26
AAFES	27



Holly Carr, 4, receives a gift bag from Santa Claus at the Main Post tree lighting ceremony, Dec. 1. Claus, along with St. Nikolaus, greeted numerous children during the event, spreading the holiday cheer.

Community celebrates the season

Story and photos by
MOLLY HAYDEN

Bavarian News

It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas. The colors of August have fallen to the ground, decorations abound at every store, "wintery" weather fills the air and the humming of Christmas tunes can be heard on every corner.

Despite the cold, drizzling rain, this holiday spirit held strong for nearly 600 revelers who attended U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr's annual tree lighting ceremony in the Main Post PX parking lot, Dec. 1. The following day, more than 500 community members attended the Rose Barracks tree lighting ceremony.

Continuing with a tradition dating back to the 1980s, the diverse crowd of military and German community members at Grafenwoehr gathered joyously for the spectacle, undaunted by the elements.

Col. Chris Sorenson, commander, USAG Grafenwoehr, welcomed the



The Netzaberg Middle School choir entertains the crowd with traditional Christmas carols prior to the tree lighting event.

crowd and offered words of support for the holiday season.

"I am happy to see all the German and American families that have come

together tonight to celebrate the tree lighting," Sorenson said. "You all truly

See TRADITIONS Page 24

COMMENTARY Army to tighten its belt next year

by Lt. Gen. RICK LYNCH
Commander, U.S. Army IMCOM

WASHINGTON – In recent years, the Army and its Installations have enjoyed unprecedented levels of funding. In fiscal year 2008, the Army hit a high water mark in its fiscal history with a total annual budget exceeding \$250 billion - three times more than FY 2001 funding level.

Much of this growth is attributed to funding the war, rebalancing our Army through investments in Army's force structure, equipment, infrastructure and key Soldier and Family programs.

Funding levels of this magnitude are unsustainable year after the year and as the country faces some stiff economic challenges, we are forced to reduce funding and exact a greater level of stewardship over our resources.

The Installation Management Command - like other commands throughout our Army - will operate at reduced funding levels. This means that starting in 2010, performance levels for some installation services will be notably less than what we have had in recent years and will remain at that level for the foreseeable future.

Our challenge is to ensure those key, higher-priority

See EFFICIENT Page 24

Shoplifters should think twice

Patrons who steal, even small items like candy bars or lip gloss, could lose AAFES privileges for 6 months

by ANGELICA MEDINA
Special to the Bavarian News

Now that the holiday shopping season is in full swing, the Army and Air Force Exchange Service has stepped up surveillance and is taking every precaution to prevent shoplifting.

According to U.S. Army Grafenwoehr Civilian Misconduct Action Authority statistics in 2009, larceny is second only to assault as the most frequent civilian misconduct charge in the Grafenwoehr and Vilseck communities. Unfortunately, children of service members are the fastest growing demographic of shoplifters with four times as many daughters of service members than sons being charged with larceny this year alone, according to Carolyn Beiter, assistant, USAG Grafenwoehr Civilian Misconduct Action Authority. In 2008, more than 50 percent of all civilian shoplifters at AAFES facilities were children of service members. Most instances of shoplifting involved merchandise of less than 70 dollars in



Photo by Molly Hayden

AAFES is stepping up surveillance on shoplifters during the holiday season.

value, with inexpensive items such as lip gloss and candy being the prime shoplifting targets.

As a result, AAFES and USAG Grafenwoehr's Directorate of Emergency Services teamed up to educate children on the consequences of shoplifting, Nov. 30. Fifth grade students from Netzaberg Elementary School attended a shoplifting awareness class followed by a tour of the AAFES loss prevention office in Grafenwoehr.

See SHOPLIFTERS Page 24

'The finger' can bring heavy fines in Germany

by ROBERT SZOSTEK
*USAREUR Provost Marshal
Public Affairs*

Inconsiderate or even dangerous moves made by other drivers really gets on your nerves. But on the road in Germany it's best to keep your cool, as the German legal system frowns on road rage, insults and rude gestures in traffic.

German courts can issue fines and even prison sentences of up to one year to drivers who shout insults or make offensive gestures while driving, the German automobile association ADAC reported in its latest magazine.

The maximum prison term goes up to two years if the dispute gets physical, the ADAC article said.

"German authorities take a particularly hard line on motorists who insult police officers or traffic wardens," said Lt. Col. Shawn Kelley, chief of law enforcement at the U.S. Army Europe Office of the Provost Marshal. This is because the motorist is not only insulting the person as such; he is also offending a representative of the state.

ADAC printed a list of fines issued for various insults directed at German traffic cops. The fines ranged from 250 to 2,500 euros.

Rude gestures toward a police officer are also a bad idea. ADAC reported that sticking your tongue out at a German police officer has resulted in fines between 150 and 300 euros. More obscene gestures were punished with fines ranging from 600 to 4,000 euros.

ADAC reported that one driver made a rude hand gesture to a video camera measuring the distance between vehicles. A German court judged that he was showing disrespect to the officers monitoring traffic - even though they were not present - and fined him 1,200 euros.

The wide range of penalties reported is due to the German fine system, which takes into account both the offender's degree of guilt and income.

Army committed to care, support

U.S. Army Europe team members, Last week our president laid out the way ahead in Afghanistan, which includes sending 30,000 additional troops to seize the initiative and build the Afghan capacity to allow for a responsible transition of our forces.

Our nation counts on the Army to organize, train and equip forces that can deploy and achieve the strategic objectives the president sets forth. That is why we exist. You are all volunteers and patriots; however, I know you also wonder how the president's initiative will affect your unit, your post, your family. We do expect some additional U.S. Army Europe units to deploy as part of this initiative, and we will notify the units, families and communities affected as soon as the secretary of defense approves the deployment orders.

Because of the growth of the Army over the past five years and the responsible drawdown in Iraq, the Army will be able to execute this increase while ending stop-loss and continuing to provide units at least 12 months at home after every 12 months of deployment.



Ham



Beam

experiencing the stress of repeated deployments. Over the past two years, more than one-third of USAREUR forces were deployed at any given time.

Currently, elements of V Corps headquarters, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, 5th Signal Command, 12th Combat Aviation Brigade and others are deployed, while the 172nd Brigade and the 16th Sustainment Brigade have just returned. Furthermore, the 1st Armored Division headquarters, 173rd Airborne

Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, 12th CAB and significant portions of 21st TSC and others are

Assuming the drawdown in Iraq continues, we will also continue to make progress toward our goal of at least two years at home station for every year deployed.

Even with the increased forces in Afghanistan ordered by the president, we estimate that more than 2/3 of the active component will reach these goals within the next two years.

USAREUR Soldiers, Families and civilians, like those everywhere, are

preparing to deploy.

As the president noted, this burden is not ours alone to bear. This is not just America's war, and our European allies are engaged and are even increasing their own troop contributions.

Just last week another iteration of the continuing partnership between 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment and Romanian soldiers began training in Hohenfels for deployment to Afghanistan.

I share your concerns for our Army families. You have carried an enormous burden in this war, and I am committed to providing a level of care and support that is commensurate with your service and sacrifice.

Our Army has never failed to answer the nation's call. The American people expect nothing less. They thank you, and I thank you for your service and sacrifice.

Carter F. Ham
Commanding General,
U.S. Army Europe

Ralph R. Beam
Command Sgt. Major,
U.S. Army Europe

COMMANDER'S MESSAGE



IMCOM budget, safety remain in forefront

This edition of the Bavarian News includes a front page article by the new Installation Management

Command's Commanding General, Lt. Gen. Rick Lynch. He is the former senior commander for Fort Stewart and Fort Hood, and knows firsthand the needs of our Army communities. Included in this edition is Lt. Gen. Lynch's article that is running in garrison newspapers worldwide, and in it he addresses the realities of the 2010 fiscal year IMCOM budget. To effectively manage our resources, Lt. Gen. Lynch wants us to focus on "doable" actions such as reducing our energy costs and increasing efficiencies.

From fiscal year 2007 to fiscal year 2009, our energy costs have increased nearly 62 percent. Much of this may be attributed to higher fuel costs, our rising population and number of facilities. Fortunately, we have enacted many of the suggestions made by our

community last year, and we continue to make energy savings efforts through programs such as incandescent light bulb replacement and nightly computer shutdowns. We are still largely responsible for reducing energy costs through own personal efforts.



For instance, during winter months, we can help conserve electricity (and avoid mold growth) by using the German push air exchange method. This involves opening the windows for three to 10 minutes. This method allows ventilation, but prevents heat from escaping excessively. Many other initiatives are in the works, but achieving savings requires that all of us take action and enforce.

In addition to these areas, leadership is also concerned with better safety. We will begin implementing our Voluntary Protection Program, or VPP, this month. The VPP is a culture of safety whereby we all

take responsibility when we see an unsafe situation and take action to make safe by either fixing the problem right then or by notifying leadership of the hazard. Much like thinking twice before picking up that ringing cell phone while driving, VPP provides a process to analyze current trends and activities, document and record safety measures taken, and ensuring that safety training is continually provided. In many cases, it tracks what we may already be doing very well, but it also reminds us to act when we sometimes become complacent. And VPP ensures we recognize those who are doing well in promoting safety and reducing accidents.

The safety and welfare of each and every one of you remains our top priority. We have continued our suicide prevention outreach and we are pleased to have added a standard hotline number, DSN 475-LIFE. Please continue to look out for your fellow Soldiers and apply the ACE (Ask, Care, and Escort) method. Please take time to care of your own physical and mental health, and most

importantly remember, "It is OK" to see help. But we have been lucky enough to already see holiday cheer and community support at our annual holiday tree lightings on Main Post and Rose Barracks. We want to thank everyone who came out and participated, and particularly the children who made the music programs so special. Our host nation neighbors' participation also makes this a memorable event for everyone.

Let us all enjoy the wonderful German Christmas markets at this time of year. Almost every German town and village in this area holds a Christmas market, so don't miss this unique experience while here in Europe.

Again, please keep safety in mind as you begin your holiday travels and stay Army Strong.

Col. Chris Sorenson
Commander, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr

CSM CORNER



Safety in all areas helps create stronger Army

First, I want to remind you that the Combined Federal Campaign, the largest workforce charity campaign, has been extended to Friday.

This means you have until Dec. 11 to fill out your CFC pledge forms and donate to your charity or charities of choice. It is a very simple process, but one that can make a big difference in our world.

I ask unit coordinators and volunteers to make follow-up contact with potential donors.

Contact the project officer for USAG Grafenwoehr, Christine Nunez, at DSN 475-8432, CIV 09641-83-8432.

If you have not already done so, go out, pick some charities, and

donate. Help our campaign finish strong!

As the yearly CFC campaign comes to an end and we get closer to the new year, stay vigilant about safety.

As I discussed in my last column, winter driving requirements are very important, but other precautions are also key to safely getting through the holidays, the winter, and the school year.

Dangerous driving has been a major issue lately. Remember that roads in and of themselves are not dangerous, but drivers can be dangerous. As conditions change, we need to slow down.

For example, Range Road alone has experienced more than five

accidents in the past four months involving wet conditions, animals, speed and inattentive driving.

School bus safety is also very important. Parents and children must always be alert with safety at the forefront of their minds.

Remember these points if your child takes the bus to school: Students must arrive at their assigned bus stop at least 5 minutes before pick-up time with their bus pass in hand.

Children in grades kindergarten through second grade have to be attended by a responsible adult at all times at bus stops and must be waiting for them at the stop when they arrive home from school. Unattended kindergarten through second-grade students are considered inappropriate and unsafe.

While school buses may have an extra attendant present, this adult is not a bus monitor. His or her primary goal is to oversee the security of students and their safety but remember that it is the responsibility of the parents to promote and enforce positive and safe behavior of their children while on school buses.

With the underlying reason of safety, children must follow these rules on the bus: Obey the driver or other adult; enter and exit the bus safely and with bus pass in hand; stay seated; keep hands and feet and body to oneself; never throw things in the bus or drop things out windows; stay quiet and do not distract the driver; no smoking, profanity, indecency or vandalism; do not eat or chew gum on the bus; and think safety!

Finally, my last safety note is about unattended cooking fires. Did you know that there were four home fires started in the last two months when food was left cooking unattended? This can be a serious hazard.

With more holiday celebrations, baking and cooking to come, remember to always stay in the kitchen when you have a pot on the stove or something baking in the oven.

Army Safe means Army Strong. Have a great holiday season.

Command Sgt. Maj.
William Bernies
CSM, U.S. Army
Garrison Grafenwoehr

Do you have an opinion on something you'd like to share with the community? Do you have a complaint, request or compliment? Write a letter to the editor and let us know!

E-mail letters to jeremy.buddemeier@eur.army.mil or dial DSN 475-7113, CIV 09641-83-7113

Bavarian News

Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Ansbach, Schweinfurt, and Garmisch

Producer: **MILCOM Advertising Agency**
Roswitha Lehner

Zeilaeckerstr. 35 · 92637 Weiden · Telefax 0961-67050-32

Internet: **www.milcom.de**

Bavarian News is an unofficial biweekly publication authorized by AR 360-1. Editorial views are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. The paper is an offset publication prepared and edited by the U.S. Army Garrison-Grafenwoehr Public Affairs Office. Bavarian News is printed by Werbeagentur und Verlag Roswitha Lehner and distributed every other Wednesday. Circulation is 9,800 copies. Submissions are welcome. Send letters to the editor and commentaries to PAO, Unit 28130, Attn: Bavarian News, APO AE 09114, or e-mail them to usaggnws@graf.eur.army.mil. Telephone the Bavarian News at 475-7113 or fax to 475-7935 with story ideas and events.

USAG Garrison Commander
Col. Chris Sorenson

USAG G Public Affairs Officer
DSN 475-8103, CIV 09641-83-8103
Kim Gillespie

Bavarian News Editor
DSN 475-7113, CIV 09641-83-7113
Jeremy S. Buddemeier

Assistant Editor
DSN 475-7775, CIV 09641-83-7775
Melissa Wolff

Garmisch Correspondent
DSN 440-3701, CIV 08821-750-3701
John Reese, USAG Garmisch PAO

Schweinfurt Correspondents
DSN 354-1400, CIV 09721-96-1400

Emily Athens, Nathan Van Schaik

Hohenfels Correspondent
DSN 466-4917, CIV 09472-83-4917
Kristin Bradley

Ansbach Correspondent
DSN 468-1600, CIV 0981-183-791
Ronald Toland



Above: Thousands of runners line the street at the start of the 1st Rock & Roll Marathon Series Yellow Ribbon Run held at Rose Barracks. Soldiers and family members braved the cold in the wee hours of the morning for a chance to break the Yellow Ribbon record.

Left: Regimental Headquarters, Headquarters Troop crosses the finish line of the 1st Rock & Roll Marathon Series Yellow Ribbon Run.

Dragoons race to set Yellow Ribbon record

Soldiers, families show up en masse despite early start

Story and photos by
Spc. JERRY WILSON
2SCR Public Affairs

Thousands of Dragoons gathered alongside their families in the wee hours of the morning, Nov. 18, in front of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regimental Headquarters for a mission.

Their objective was to set a world record for the largest Yellow Ribbon Run ever conducted by service members on a military installation by participating in the first-ever Rock & Roll Marathon Series Yellow Ribbon Run.

“Today is a day of celebration,” said Troy Mason, sponsorship and advertising manager for U.S. Army Garrisons Grafenwoehr and Garmisch. “A celebration of our returning troops, and also pays tribute to our Soldiers who have been deployed and are preparing to deploy.”

The event was produced by MWR USAG Grafenwoehr and the nonprofit organization The Warrior Tours. The Warrior Tours link the men and women of the U.S. armed forces with the American people through physical fitness by teaming up stateside events with US military bases worldwide.

The organization connects service members with their friends and families through video, text and images that are posted

on its Web site and broadcast at domestic sporting events.

The Warrior Tours founder Robi Powers announced the run. Powers has been referred to as America’s Voice of Running since 1988, and is a former U.S. National Team Athlete, Olympic teams coach and former U.S. armed forces sports program athlete. Powers was also a Soldier himself, having served in the 172nd Mountain Infantry Brigade.

“I’ve been announcing at some of America’s largest running events for 22 years and can honestly say that being a part of the USAG Grafenwoehr military community’s Rock and Roll Marathon Series Yellow Ribbon Run was one of my absolute career highlights to date,” Powers said. “The Warrior Tours foundation is sharing this with hundreds of thousands of Americans who are runners or family members of runners through competitor group and several worldwide magazines. What really brought it home for me was the recognition of family that was incorporated into the event.”

Following the race, Powers was given a tour of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and met and talked with Soldiers in their workplace.

“That was the icing on the American cake for me,” he said, “getting to meet some of the finest soldiers in the world, at work, doing their jobs.”

While the official registration count for the run set the record at 1,943 participants, organizers estimated over 2,500 runners took part in the event.

2SCR’s new M-777 howitzers blend past, present



Soldiers from 2SCR move their new M-777 howitzers, which bear the names of Regimental Medal of Honor winners, into firing position for the naming ceremony.

Story and photo by
Spc. JERRY WILSON
2SCR Public Affairs

The 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment’s FIRES Squadron gathered Nov. 20, to honor some of the outstanding troopers from the regiment’s rich history.

FIRES became the first unit in European command to receive the new M-777 towed, lightweight 155 mm howitzer. It has long been customary for gun crews to name their weapons when they receive them. In keeping with this tradition, 2SCR’s Fires Squadron named its guns after 18 Soldiers of the regiment who were awarded the Medal of Honor for valor and bravery during the Civil War and Indian Wars, ranging from 1864 to 1880.

During the ceremony, each battery designated one senior noncommissioned officer to read the names of the Medal of Honor recipients and describe how that Soldier earned his medal. The event concluded with a celebratory 21-gun salute.

The M-777 is an advanced, towed lightweight 155 mm howitzer that meets increased operational needs for mobility,

survivability, sustainability and deployment. The M-777 provides accurate, reliable, responsive and all-terrain close supporting fires to maneuver forces.

A key component of the M-777 is the Digital Fire Control System, which allows for self-locating, self-aiming and self-pointing capability. Nondigitized M-777 howitzers with optical fire control were first delivered to the Marine Corps in 2004, and a fully digital upgraded model (designated M-777A1) was delivered to selected Army units beginning in 2005. The M-777 models will be the main artillery system for the Army’s Stryker Brigade Combat Teams.

The M-777 howitzer is designed to be towed by any four-wheel drive vehicle with capacity greater than 2.5 tons and is capable of being transported by both fixed-wing and rotary wing air assets.

A key advantage allowing for this wide range of mobility is the fact that the M-777 howitzer is made of titanium to achieve its light weight and high performance. The M-777 is 7,000 lbs. lighter than the M-198 howitzer model it replaced. Combined with the newly developed Excalibur projectile, the M-777 will be capable of delivering GPS precision strike capability at extreme ranges.

Master Resiliency Trainers to promote overall fitness

by **DAVE MELANCON**
U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs

Units have their master gunners, master drivers and master fitness trainers. These experts are the best at what they do and they share their expertise with their fellow Soldiers.

By next October, each U.S. Army Europe brigade and battalion-level unit will have a new type of master assigned to its ranks -- a Master Resiliency Trainer. MRTs will serve as their units’ experts in building mental, physical and spiritual health as part of the Army’s Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, said MRT program manager Jessie Massey, USAREUR’s deputy chief of medical operations.

In the meantime, seven USAREUR members -- Massey, four senior NCOs and two senior family members graduated from the MRT certification course at the University of Pennsylvania, Nov. 19, to become the command’s first resiliency experts.

“Eventually, we will have an MRT in every unit down to company level. We are working with Installation Management Command and Army Community Service to get the training down to the Family Readiness Group level,” Massey said.

Each MRT works for and reports to his or her unit commander, he said. At the brigade level, MRT duty is a full-time position, similar to the unit’s

equal opportunity advisor. At lower echelons, the position will be assigned as an additional duty.

The USAREUR surgeon’s office will oversee the unit programs, ensuring they receive the resources do their jobs, as well as make the MRT program available to family members and civilian employees, Massey added. They will also work with other USAREUR staff agencies to measure the effectiveness of the program.

He stressed that the MRT NCOs are not counselors or health care providers. As one of the person-to-person facets of the Army’s Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program, they will be able to talk with Soldiers as part of their unit’s resiliency training program.

The Army’s CSF program is designed to build resilience in all members of the Army community -- Soldiers, Family members and civilian employees -- by developing five dimensions of strength: physical, emotional, social, spiritual and family.

“This is one of the first programs that targets what is already OK and (makes) it better,” Massey said. “Many of our current programs target a segment of our population that has previously been identified with a problem. This program looks at the whole person, with the goal to improve performance.”

“The Army has realized total fitness

is much more than just physical fitness. It’s about total wellness and fitness, building strength and resiliency in our Soldiers, Families, civilians and retirees,” said Col. Jeffrey Dill, U.S. Army Garrison Wiesbaden commander, in the Oct. 8, 2009 edition of the Herald-Union newspaper. “The simple message is (that) everyone benefits from it. It’s about our health and well-being, building our inner strength and our resiliency, our ability to deal with hard times.”

The first USAREUR unit MRTs -- Master Sgt. Marvin Henley of 1st Armored Division; Sgt. 1st Class David Hooks of 21st Theater Sustainment Command; Sgt. 1st Class Michael Bradley of 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment; and Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Stoner of 18th Military Police Brigade -- will design, implement and sustain their units’ resiliency training programs, Massey said.

“The goal is to institutionalize the program so that it becomes a way of life for the Total Army,” he explained, noting that new Soldiers will undergo CSF training in basic training and advanced individual training.

One of the primary tools the Army has designed to help the MRTs measure resiliency is the Global Assessment Tool, a survey that looks at each individual’s strengths or weaknesses in four of the program’s five focus areas, including emotional, social, spiritual



Soldiers review the curriculum of the Master Resilience Trainer course at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, recently. Seven U.S. Army Europe members are among the more than 150 participants in the course.

and family.

The survey was created by experts from the U.S. military and civilian universities. CSF program officials say it is not a diagnostic tool, but rather a way for a person to visualize performance growth based on changes in training, experience and maturity.

The Army course was adapted from a civilian program designed for teachers that was reworked to meet the

experiences and needs of the military community.

“Being ‘Army Strong’ is more than just being physically fit,” said Brig. Gen. Rhonda Cornum, the Army’s CSF program director. “We’re not just preparing Soldiers for the battlefield. We’re preparing them for life. We are elevating mental fitness to the same level where we have held physical fitness.”

Army to display flexible technology

by **DAVID MCNALLY**

Army News Service

The Army's research and development community is gearing up for a public technology demonstration, Jan. 4-9, at the All-American Bowl in San Antonio, Texas.

The sporting event promises to connect America's student-athletes with Soldiers and the technology supporting them.

One of the hot items featured in the Army Strong Zone will be flexible displays. The U.S. Army funds the Flexible Display Center at Arizona State University, and officials say the technology shows promise.

"Our goal is to move this flexible display technology forward with cutting-edge research, and hopefully to see this made available for use in Soldier equipment," said U.S. Army Research, Development and Engineering Command spokesman Robert DiMichele.

The Army Research Laboratory, Natick Soldier Research Development and Engineering Center and the Communications-Electronics Research, Development and Engineering Center have teamed up with Arizona State University researchers to further advance this technology and come up with innovative solutions for Soldiers in the field.

"Imagine replacing glass-based displays with light-weight, rugged flexible displays using minimal power," DiMichele said. "The lighter the load, the more efficient the warfighter."

Officials said the Army is studying reflective and emissions technology for the screens to be

integrated in "human-portable applications," which will let Soldiers see the screen without backlighting. "This will be designed to not give away a location of a Soldier while on a mission," DiMichele said.

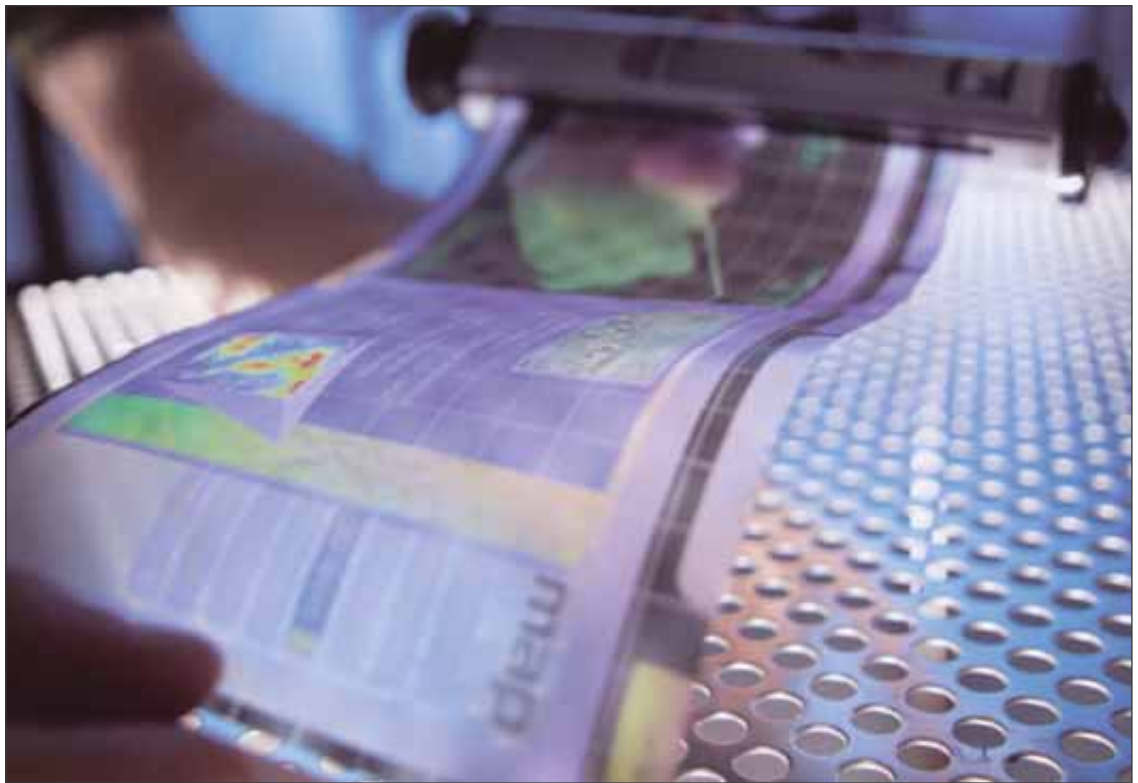
By replacing the current liquid crystal glass-based display, the amount of battery power used drops by at least half, and the display is less likely to break on a mission.

Presently, the industry is flooded with Liquid Crystal Display and plasma screens, all of which are delicate and need to be ruggedized for military use. However, with the development of flexible reflective technology, Soldiers may be able to wear a bendable display device, or roll-up or ultimately fold the display screen, thus increasing Soldier capabilities to carry and convey mission information.

These screens would be used in mission planning and rehearsal, land navigation and to provide the warfighter with the most up-to-date information just prior to departing for a mission.

"The best application would allow Soldiers to connect to a computer database and download information necessary to complete the mission," DiMichele said. "Then the Soldier would disconnect, and retain the information on the device, fold or roll it up and pack it away. These screens could also be worn on the forearm of a military uniform for easy access while in the midst of battle."

Editor's Note: David McNally writes for Research, Development and Engineering Command Public Affairs.



Courtesy photo

The Army is looking into flexible screens to be used in mission planning and rehearsal, land navigation and to provide the warfighter with the most up-to-date information before departing for a mission. The new technology, which replaces the current liquid crystal glass-based display, will reduce the amount of battery power used by at least 50 percent, and be less likely to break on a mission.

Army to separate Soldiers who don't extend to deploy

by **J.D. LEIPOLD**

Army News Service

WASHINGTON -- Soldiers who don't agree to extend their enlistments in units slated to deploy on or after Jan. 1 may be involuntarily separated up to three months early.

The new Enlisted Involuntary Early Separation Program will affect active-duty Soldiers scheduled to separate during the first six months of their unit's deployment. These Soldiers will be asked to re-enlist or extend so they can stay with their unit through its full deployment and two months after returning.

Soldiers who participate in the Deployment Extension Incentive Program will receive an extra \$350 or \$500 for every month extended. (Those who extend at least six months before deploying will receive the full \$500 per month.)

Those who don't re-enlist or extend will not deploy and will be separated up to three months prior to their contractual separation date, according to Maj. Jennifer Walkawicz, personnel policy integrator, G1.

The involuntary separation program

applies only to regular Army enlisted Soldiers with more than 36 months of active service and less than 71 months of total service, Walkawicz said, when they have an ending term-of-service date during their unit's first six months of deployment.

Soldiers with an ETS date occurring during the last six months of their unit's deployment will still deploy and simply return early to out-process if they choose not to re-enlist or extend, she said.

Walkawicz estimated that EIESP will result in 1,350 to 1,450 Soldiers being separated early with an annual cost savings of about \$8.5 million.

"The Army is implementing this program now as part of the Stop Loss Reduction plan," she said, explaining that the Stop Loss program will be phased out beginning Jan. 1, in favor of voluntary extensions or early separation.

"This program allows the Army to identify Soldiers preparing to ETS who will not deploy with the unit, then provide replacements for those Soldiers prior to the unit's deployment date," Walkawicz said.

She said the new guidance will



Photo by Staff Sgt. Andrew Smith

A Soldier scans a ridgeline from an observation post near Combat Outpost Munoz in the Paktika province of Afghanistan. Under a new policy announced by the Army, Soldiers who don't agree to extend their enlistments in units slated to deploy on or after Jan. 1, 2010, may be involuntarily separated up to three months early.

ensure ample time for newly reporting Soldiers to train on individual and collective tasks and settle in their

families. She said those Soldiers who have decided to leave the Army are generally first-term enlistees and will

not lose any entitlements.

She also said Soldiers who chose not to re-enlist or extend for the deployment duration and are separated will retain all rights, privileges and benefits such as the Post-9/11 GI Bill benefits. However, EIESP Soldiers will not be entitled to pay and allowances for the period not served.

The involuntary early separation does not apply to Soldiers facing courts-martial or under investigation for Uniform Code of Military Justice offenses.

The Army has mandated battalion commanders notify affected Soldiers at least 90 days prior to their adjusted date of separation. Due to the 90-day written notice requirement, Human Resources Command will phase in the EIESP.

As the program is phased in, Soldiers with an ETS between April 1-30 will be separated one month earlier, Walkawicz said. Soldiers with an ETS between May 1-31 will be involuntarily separated two months earlier than their ETS; and Soldiers whose ETS is on or after June 1 will be separated three months earlier than their contract stipulates, she said.

Year of the NCO Spotlight



Sgt. 1st Class Israel Walker

Age: 32

Current Unit: HHC, JMTC Combined Arms Training Center

Current Position: Mobile Training Team Coordinator

Component: U.S. Army

Current Location: Vilseck, Germany

Hometown: Albany, Ga.

Years of Service: 13



After 13 years, Sgt 1st Class Israel Walker is intimately familiar with what it means to be a leader in today's Army. As a Mobile Training Team Coordinator for the 7th U.S. Army Joint Multinational Training Command Combined Arms Training Center, Walker plays a pivotal role in resourcing and coordinating training for units who have recently redeployed from combat operations.

In his words, setting the example is an integral part of being an effective noncommissioned officer (NCO). It is a credo he is passionate about.

"I think what makes being a good NCO is just being able to set the example and lead by example," Walker said. "Just being able to show the Soldiers, yes, I will get down and dirty with you. I will get up under that Humvee and change tires and get up oil spills and things of that nature."

Lessons, such as these, are not pulled out of the air. They are passed on as part of a proud NCO tradition of Senior NCOs mentoring junior leaders in the art of being an NCO, the backbone of the Army.

Walker learned from his small group leader during

the Primary Leadership Development Course to never let your personal life interfere with your job.

"If he was in a bad mood, we didn't see it. He always stayed professional in front of us. Regardless of what was going on with him, personally or job-wise, he never showed it. And I think seeing that just kind of made me say, 'Wow, I want to be like that.'"

The lessons he learned from his mentor stuck with him and affected his leadership style as an NCO.

"One of the things I love about being a leader is being active in junior Soldiers' everyday lives, their everyday duties and responsibilities, showing the guys the right way over the wrong, and just being there."

Walker said he believes in the traditions of the NCO Corps. With aspirations of becoming the Sergeant Major of the Army, Walker has a few words of wisdom to share with young Soldiers and future NCOs.

"Stay professional ... You no longer have junior Soldiers looking at you. You also have your peers, as well as senior NCOs, expecting more of you because you are part of a tradition that goes back many, many years."

President Obama calls for unity

by **JIM GARAMONE**
Army News Service

WASHINGTON - The Afghanistan strategy review included many options, but President Barack Obama deemed the increase of 30,000 U.S. troops to institute counterinsurgency operations was the best one.

The president said the national security leadership team discussed the concerns that many people have about U.S. involvement in Afghanistan. He addressed them in his speech, Dec. 1, at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y.

Obama said many say the war in Afghanistan is like the U.S. war in Vietnam.

"They argue that it cannot be stabilized, and we are better off cutting our losses and rapidly withdrawing," he said. "Yet this argument depends upon a false reading of history."

Unlike Vietnam, a broad coalition supports the effort in Afghanistan, the president said. The Taliban is an extremist group, not a popular front like the Viet Cong.

"And most importantly, unlike Vietnam, the American people were viciously attacked from Afghanistan, and remain a target for those same extremists who are plotting along its border," Obama said. "To abandon this area now - and to rely only on efforts against al-Qaida from a distance - would significantly hamper our ability to keep the pressure on al-Qaida, and create an unacceptable risk of additional attacks on our homeland and our allies."

Other people say that the 68,000 U.S. troops in Afghanistan are enough.

"This would simply maintain a status quo in which we muddle through, and permit a slow deterioration of conditions there," the president said. "It would ultimately prove more costly and prolong our stay in Afghanistan, because we would never be able to generate the conditions needed to train Afghan security forces and give them the space to take over."

Still others criticize the strategy for identifying a timeframe for transition to Afghan responsibility. They say there should be a "more dramatic and open-ended escalation of our war effort - one that would commit us to a nation-building project of up to a decade," Obama said. "I reject this course because it sets goals that are beyond what can be achieved at a reasonable cost, and what we need to achieve to secure our interests."

No timeframe also means no urgency, the president said. "It must be clear that Afghans will have to take responsibility for their security, and that America has no interest in fighting an endless war in Afghanistan," he said.

The cost of the effort in Afghanistan will



Photo by Tommy Gilligan

President Barack Obama walks to the lectern to present his strategy on Afghanistan to the nation and a live audience of about 4,200 cadets and guests at Eisenhower Hall Theatre at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., Dec. 1. After the 35-minute speech, he took time to shake hands and pose for photos with many of the cadets.

still be high.

"All told, by the time I took office the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan approached a trillion dollars," Obama said. "Going forward, I am committed to addressing these costs openly and honestly. Our new approach in Afghanistan is likely to cost us roughly \$30 billion for the military this year, and I will work closely with Congress to address these costs as we work to bring down our deficit."

Succeeding in Afghanistan will not be easy, the president said, but it can be done.

"The struggle against violent extremism will not be finished quickly, and it extends well beyond Afghanistan and Pakistan," he said. "It will be an enduring test of our free society, and our leadership in the world. And unlike the great power conflicts and clear lines of division that defined the 20th century, our effort will involve disorderly regions, failed states and diffuse enemies."

But the United States can do this if Americans stick together and respond to our highest aspirations. "We must draw on the strength of our values - for the challenges that we face may

have changed, but the things that we believe in must not," the president said.

Since World War II, American service members have spilled their blood in many countries. The Marshall Plan helped rebuild Europe, and America has joined with allies to create an architecture of institutions - from the United Nations to NATO to the World Bank - that provide for the common security and prosperity of human beings, Obama said.

"We have not always been thanked for these efforts, and we have at times made mistakes," he said. "But more than any other nation, the United States of America has underwritten global security for over six decades - a time that, for all its problems, has seen walls come down, markets open, billions lifted from poverty, unparalleled scientific progress, and advancing frontiers of human liberty."

The president told the Corps of Cadets that Americans of today are "heirs to a noble struggle for freedom," and that freedom is again challenged.

Editor's Note: Jim Garamone writes for the American Forces Press Service.

Spotlight on Education



Name: Teri Motton

What grade and subject do you teach? READ 180 / Math Coach

Hometown: Glendale, Ariz.

How long have you been a teacher? 12 years.

What do you enjoy most about teaching? I enjoy being such a positive influence in students' lives, knowing there is at least one thing they will remember as they get older.

I also love those "ah ha" moments students encounter when something finally makes sense for the first time. Those connections are huge!

What advice can you give students to help them succeed? They are in charge of their own destiny. No matter what is happening now, they always have a choice to continue on their current path, or choose a different one to take them to a better place in life.

HooahMail brings letters to Afghanistan

E-mail/snail mail combo brings home to the front

by **C. TODD LOPEZ**
Army News Service

WASHINGTON - The Army's HooahMail program makes it possible for friends and family members to put a paper letter and photograph into the hands of their loved ones in Afghanistan, in some cases, on the same day it's sent.

The one-year pilot program began Dec. 1 and makes use of the Internet combined with physical mail delivery to

create a hybrid mail system that can get letters into the hands of Soldiers in remote locations much faster than regular mail delivery alone.

"This gives Soldiers actual printed correspondence that is sent from their family members that they can take out on a mission with them and read and reread again," said Bill Hilsher, Army postal program manager.

Family members that want to send a letter and a photograph to a Soldier in Afghanistan would log into the program's Web site at www.hooahmail.us.

There, they type in their message

and attach a digital photo. They also add delivery information for their Soldier, as though they were addressing a paper envelope.

Their electronic letter is sent via the Internet to one of 10 locations in Afghanistan where special equipment will automatically print it, fold it, stuff it into an envelope, address it, and seal it. The sealed envelopes are then placed into the regular intra-theater APO mail delivery system.

Hilsher said depending on where Soldiers are in Afghanistan, the paper letter from home could be in their hands the same day as mother sent it, or it could take as many as four days. A paper letter sent directly from the states takes much longer, Hilsher said.

"Compared to traditional mail ... it reduces it from an average of 14 days down to same-day or next-day, ready for delivery," he said.

The HooahMail program is free for family members and friends, and is available for Soldiers in Afghanistan only.

Hilsher said the Army postal service expects the program to benefit the service during the holiday season, when it typically sees increases in mail traffic.

"During the holiday season, that's your busiest time and this is going to augment that system," he said. "It'll give friends and families a way to send a message to their loved ones in a timely manner for the holiday season."

Hilsher also said he thinks the improved delivery time will have a positive effect on Soldier morale.

Service for the Army's HooahMail pilot program is provided by "SuperLetter," which provides similar services to the British military for its "e-Bluey" program and the U.S. Marine Corps for its "Motomail" program.

Honoring fallen brethren



Photo by Nick D'Amario

The Grafenwoehr Main Post Theater was packed with hundreds of Soldiers, family members and civilians who came to pay their respects at a service honoring Sgt. Christopher Michael Cooper and Spc. Matthew Carl Johnson, both from Task Force 2-28, 172nd Infantry Brigade, Nov. 19.



Photo by John Vachon

World War II Soldiers read letters from friends and family during a mail call in January of 1943. The Army's HooahMail program makes it possible for Soldiers in Afghanistan to receive letters in days, instead of weeks, as in previous wars.



Photo by Gertrude Zach

Soldiers serve gratitude for holidays

Senior leaders from the 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command, 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment and the Grafenwoehr Garrison serve Thanksgiving dinner to Soldiers and community members at the dining facility on Rose Barracks, Nov. 26.

Electronic charging units a hot issue

by TOM SAUNDERS

IMCOM Europe Public Affairs

HEIDELBERG, Germany - Hot commodities on the gift-giving market are turning into a hotter issue for safety officials.

Electronic charging units designed for use in motor vehicles for a variety of portable music players and other electronic gadgets have been identified as culprits responsible for vehicle fires.

"We received a safety alert that charger and converter units used to play or charge various electronic items may overheat if left plugged into a car power source resulting in a vehicle fire," said Mike Schwarz, Installation Management Command-Europe safety officer. "A good rule of thumb is to unplug these devices when they are not in use. That rule also applies to devices in the household: When not in use, unplug."

According to Schwarz, the safety alert described an incident involving a 2007 Chevy Suburban destroyed as a result of an electrical fire.

This fire resulted from leaving an iPhone charger/docking station plugged into the car outlet. The charger unit overheated and started a fire, while parked in a residential garage. The owners of the vehicle were very fortunate that they accidentally found the fire at 11 p.m. before going to bed and before it spread to the house. None of the garage heat detectors or house fire alarms had gone off.

"As these devices become more popular, it becomes more important for all of us to use common sense and be safety conscious," said Schwarz.



Courtesy photo

A charging unit left plugged in resulted in major fire damage to this vehicle.

With privilege of military ID comes need for responsibility

by Sgt. Maj. CAMERON PORTER

21st Theater Sustainment Command Public Affairs

Being a member of the U.S. military is an honorable profession. Whether you are an active duty service member, reservist, civilian employee or family member, you should be very proud of your contributions to our nation and the American way of life.

But with this comes responsibility.

Safeguarding your DD Form 1173, better known as your military identification card, is a responsibility that cannot be taken for granted. Proper procedures for strict accountability and security shall be maintained to prevent your military ID card from getting lost or stolen. Every time a military ID card is lost or stolen, operational security and ultimately American lives are placed in danger.

When a military ID card cannot be accounted for by the issuing activity, a report is issued to the unit commander responsible. This report indicates the circumstances involved, corrective action taken and, if warranted, disciplinary action.

The individual with the missing military ID card must report its loss or theft promptly through resubmission of a DD Form 1172, with the following statement under block 89: "I certify that DD Form 1173 previously issued to (insert name of card holder) was lost or stolen under the following circumstances: (give complete circumstances surrounding loss or theft). I further certify that the card has not been located after a diligent search, and that if recovered, the card will be surrendered to the proper military authority."

Too many servicemembers, DOD civilians and family members do not understand the severities associated with losing their military ID cards. It is a very serious matter, and everyone must know what their responsibilities are when it comes to maintaining accountability and control of this small but highly critical item.

Losing your military ID card is a form of dereliction of duty and is punishable under the Uniformed Code of Military Justice. You may also be punished for abuse. Any person willfully altering, damaging, lending, counterfeiting or using their military ID card in any unauthorized manner is committing abuse and is subject to fine or imprisonment or both.

In addition, unauthorized or fraudulent use of a military ID card exists if the person uses the card in a manner that would enable him to obtain benefits and privileges to which he is not entitled. It is illegal to give your military ID card to someone else or to take someone else's military ID card and use it as your own.

While the idea of safeguarding your military ID card from loss or theft, fraudulent use or abuse is a simple concept - it continues to occur. Take responsibility, be proud or who you are and what you do and don't be the one who falls short. Your military ID card is an extremely important and abusing or losing it can be costly.

RETIREE CORNER

Retirees should keep personal files, tax and medical care information up-to-date

by Retired Sgt. Maj. DAVE STEWART

President, Garrison Retiree Council

Garrison military retirees took advantage of agency assistance at the Retirement Appreciation Day, recently. Many updated their finance records and legal information, but regrettably there are far too many who haven't updated their personal data files that should be at the finger tips for survivors. Important documents are: original DD Form 214, retirement orders, separation papers, funeral instructions, latest retiree earnings document, VA information, insurance policies, certificate of naturalization (if applicable).

Other pertinent data includes a list of passwords for key Internet accounts and, of course, one's bank and safety deposit data.

I recently helped the widow of a retiree who had everything in order. This made things extraordinarily simple. But if we had to struggle to locate files and information this could have easily turned into serious muddle.

Taxes

Like death, as the saying goes, taxes are also

a certainty. Survivors need to know where the previous tax files are located. And taxes will have to be filed a year after the retiree passes away. This is where the local military legal center comes in. If you have questions on filing final taxes, make an appointment with these experts, they're prepared to assist you.

And speaking of taxes, living permanently overseas presents special tax filing situations. Certain income is not taxed by the U.S., such as Social Security, but is taxed by the host nation in accordance with the Tax Treaty. There is no template to place on every situation and again, the local legal center can help.

Speaking of taxes, the new year is approaching and next month many of us will be begin to pull together the forms and documents needed to file. Look for more informaiton in future articles.

Medical note

At the last Retiree Council meeting, Lt. Col. Kendra Whyatt, Grafenwoehr Clinic commander, said there is a misunderstanding that medical care is not available to retirees. The commander said retirees can call or come to the clinic to make appointments on a space-available basis. The commander also said she

needed retiree assistance to keep the preventive medical tests up-to-date, such as colonoscopies and breast cancer screenings. Retirees who have recently had these tests completed with an economy physician can share the results with the clinic for inclusion in health records.

Taps

Retired Col. Steve Bowman

Former Berlin Retiree Subcouncil president Army retired Col. Steve Bowman passed away in September. Bowman, 63, and a native of Canton, Ohio, graduated from the Military Academy at West Point in 1968 and Duke University in 1986 with a master's in history and a Ph.D. in military history.

He served as an Airborne Ranger in Vietnam where he was awarded the Silver Star and two Purple Hearts. He taught history at West Point and served as a deputy brigade commander in Germany. He is survived by his wife Gabriele; his children Scott, Megan and Lee; and two grandsons. Burial was at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point.

Retired Capt. Joseph Zupan

One of the garrison's oldest retirees, retired Capt. Joseph Zupan passed away in late October.

He was 90. Zupan was a World War II, Korea and Cold War veteran. He was awarded two Bronze Stars and the Purple Heart for action in the Pacific and Korea. Zupan and was stationed in Hawaii when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. He was given a battle field promotion to 2nd lieutenant during action in Korea.

He later served in Germany as the commander of B Troop, 1st Squadron, 2nd Artillery Cavalry Regiment, at Christensen Barracks in Bindlach. The 2nd ACR had the responsibility of guarding the East-West German border Zupan is survived by his widow Annaliese. They celebrated their golden anniversary this year. Burial was at Arlington Cemetery, Nov. 30.

Holiday mail volunteers needed

With the holiday season upon us, I would like to appeal to our retirees to volunteer some of their free time to assist the mail rooms in Grafenwoehr, Hohenfels, Vilseck and Garmisch.

This is always an extraordinary mail period, but with the added deployed troop factor and the stay behind family members living within the garrison, the burden becomes especially heavy. If you can pitch in contact the manager of the mail room in your area.

1-4 NCOs take home Turkey Bowl trophy

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

The 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment noncommissioned officers took home the Turkey Bowl championship trophy yet again after beating the Operations Group noncommissioned officers in Hohenfels’ annual day-before-Thanksgiving flag-football showdown.

As is Turkey Bowl tradition, both 1-4 and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center Ops Group first had their NCO team play their officer team to decide who would represent the unit in the final game.

For the officers and NCOs from 1-4’s Headquarters and Headquarters Company, the Hohenfels flag football championship team that also competed in the Installation Management Command-Europe Unit Level Flag Football Championship, that meant former teammates suddenly found themselves on opposite sides of the field, a split that seemed to favor the NCOs as they beat the officers 33-0 in the first game of the morning.

It was a closer game between the Ops Group teams, but the NCOs eventually won 14-6.

For the third and final game between the 1-4 NCOs and the JMRC Ops Group, Soldiers lined the field ready to cheer their unit to victory. Spectators joked with each other off the field while on the field tensions grew with each passing minute.

“This is post bragging rights for an entire year,” said Sgt. Bryson Kirby, quarterback for the 1-4 NCOs, explaining why the competition

was so intense.

At half time, the teams were tied 6-6. After the second half began the fast-paced game got even faster and 1-4 took off, eventually besting Ops Group 31-12.

“We dropped some balls and made some penalties in the first half. We didn’t make those same mistakes in the second half and they did,” said Kirby of his team’s improved second half performance.

An interception in the middle of the half also helped 1-4 gain some crucial momentum.

“As soon as we intercepted that ball it immediately changed the tempo of the game. They knew when we had the ball we usually score,” said Staff Sgt. Carlos Velasquez. “We had them on their backs.”

While his team certainly was not lacking intensity, Ops Group quarterback Sgt. 1st Class Derek Kitts admitted they made mistakes that kept them from finishing the game on their terms.

“The sign of a good team is the ability to close out the game,” said Kitts. “If you want to finish out a game you’ve got to be able to step on their throat, and when you step on their throat you’ve got to be able to finish them off.

“We had them in the first half and we should have scored more but they were able to hang tough and keep up with their plan.”

Despite the occasional heated temper on the field, both quarterbacks agreed that ultimately the game is a community-building activity and was all in good fun.

“There is no love lost between anybody at the end of the day,” said Kirby, adding that such events are especially important for young



Players on the Joint Multinational Readiness Center Operations Group noncommissioned officer flag-football team try to stop one of the NCOs from 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment from making it into the end zone. The 1-4 NCOs made it into the end zone many times, eventually beating Ops Group 31-12 to take home the trophy in Hohenfels’ annual day-before-Thanksgiving Turkey Bowl.

Soldiers. “This is great for the young guys. It shows them there are a lot of esprit de corps events inside the Army.”

“We usually only interact with 1-4 inside the

box, so this gives us the chance to get out and do something together we don’t usually get to do,” said Kitts. “It spreads good will inside the command.”



Dinner is served

Col. John Spiszer, Joint Multinational Readiness Center commander, and other Hohenfels officers and noncommissioned officers serve Thanksgiving dinner to customers at the Warrior Sports Cafe dining facility. The facility served more than 450 meals and roasted 17 turkeys for the event.

Photo by Todd Oliver



Pumpkin cooking contest reveals winning recipes

To celebrate fall, Hohenfels chefs cooked-up their best pumpkin recipes for the annual Pumpkin Love Cooking contest hosted by the Turnbull Memorial Library, Nov. 18. After a panel of community leaders sampled more than 15 entries, they came up with this year’s top three recipes, featured here.

1st Place:
Let Your Cookies Take a Pumpkin Dip with Chewy Gingerbread and Molasses Cookies
by Jeanette Fry

Pumpkin Dip ingredients
2 ounces feta
1/2 cup yogurt
2 cups canned pumpkin



Photo by Kristin Bradley
Jeanette Fry’s entry, Let Your Cookies Take a Pumpkin Dip, is displayed.

1/2 cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla
3 teaspoons cinnamon

Chewy Gingerbread and Molasses Cookie ingredients
1 cup olive oil
1 cup packed brown sugar
1 cup molasses
1/4 cup water
1 3/4 cups unbleached flour
1 3/4 cups whole wheat flour
1/4 cup wheat germ
1/4 cup ground flax seed
1 cup almond flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
2 tablespoons ground crystallized ginger
1 tablespoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon cloves

For the dip: Put the feta into a food processor and process until the pieces are very small. Cream the sugar and feta together. Add the other ingredients and mix well.

For the cookies: Cream brown sugar and olive oil, then add molasses and water. In a separate bowl, combine dry ingredients, then add to wet ingredients and mix together. Let dough cool, covered, in the freezer for at least one hour.

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Roll out dough and cut into 3-inch fingers. Bake cookies 6 to 8 minutes, depending on thickness. They will appear slightly under baked when removed from the oven, but that’s what makes them so good and chewy! Let cookies cool on wire rack.

Makes about 48 cookies.

2nd Place:
Pumpkin Cream Cheese Torte
by Amanda Elliott

Cake ingredients
2 sticks (1 cup) butter
3 eggs
2 1/2 cups flour
1 cup granulated sugar
1/2 cup pumpkin (canned or fresh pureed)
1/2 cup sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/3 teaspoon (or less) salt

Filling ingredients
8 ounces cream cheese
1/3 cup granulated sugar
1 egg
1/4 cup canned pumpkin
1 tablespoon corn starch
1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Glaze ingredients
1 cup pumpkin
2 teaspoons cinnamon sugar
1 1/2 cups powdered sugar
1/8 cup hazelnut coffee cream

Frosting ingredients
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
1/2 cup butter
1 1/2 to 2 cups powdered sugar
1/2 cup canned pumpkin pie mix

For the filling: In a mixing bowl, beat ingredients until very smooth then set aside while preparing the cake batter.

For the cake: Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, cream the butter, sugar and vanilla until light and fluffy. Add eggs and beat well. Add flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. Mix in pumpkin and sour cream. Blend thoroughly until smooth. Pour half of batter into two round cake pans. Add the filling mix over both, spreading the batter evenly in the dish. Add remaining batter and lightly swirl into filling. Bake for 40 minutes. Allow to cool. Stack both cakes with frosting in between. Serve with glaze.

3rd Place:
Creamy Pumpkin Pasta
by Natalie Cannata

Ingredients
15 ounces pumpkin
3 cloves garlic: 2 minced, 1 whole
2 tablespoons chopped fresh sage, plus 12 whole sage leaves
1/2 cup ricotta cheese
1/4 cup parmesan cheese
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt
6 ounces butter
1/2 pint cream
hot cooked pasta

In a bowl, combine pumpkin, minced garlic, sage, two cheeses and salt. Mix well. Sauté whole sage leaves in butter with one clove of garlic. Cook until butter browns slightly, 10 to 15 minutes. Turn off heat and remove garlic and sage leaves. Add browned butter to pumpkin mix and heat over medium heat in a pot. Add cream slowly while constantly stirring. Serve over hot cooked pasta and garnish with fresh sage.

Soldiers feel effects of drunken driving

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

It is no secret that drunken driving claims thousands of lives each year. Every driver knows the danger yet many continue to do it anyway, risking not just their lives but those of everyone else on the road as well.

“It won’t happen to me,” they say, but alcohol physically alters everyone’s ability to operate a car, no matter how many times someone insists, “I’m fine.”

To prove that point, the Alcohol and Substance Abuse Program invited the Save a Life Tour and its hands-on drunken driving simulator to visit Soldiers at locations throughout Europe.

A touring educational program with young, casual presenters, SALT presents yet another reason for drivers to stay away from alcohol and take the keys from anyone who does not.

“I use a peer approach instead of lecturing them. I’ve done it all so it’s not like I’m lecturing, but I can explain the seriousness of learning the consequences (of drunken driving) through a death, not a DUI or an arrest,” said Chris Geysbeck, one of the SALT presenters who came to U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels in late November. Geysbeck said he learned those consequences when a drunken driver killed his best friend.

The presentation begins with a graphic video showing original footage of fatal drunken driving accidents and testimonials from those who, like Geysbeck, have lost a loved one.

As gruesome as the images are and as heartbreaking as the testimonials are, that



Spc. Mia Parker navigates the virtual streets of the Save a Life Tour drunken-driving simulator. Tour presenter Chris Geysbeck explains to Parker and the audience that her simulated alcohol level is causing a delayed reaction time, making it difficult to steer and brake properly.

approach has been used for years and people still drink and drive so SALT also uses a new technique that shows drivers firsthand, when they’re sober and will hopefully remember, what drinking does to their ability to drive.

Much more elaborate than anything at

the arcade, the simulator has three screens surrounding the driver and all the usual gadgets and gauges of a normal car. The steering wheel, brake and gas pedals are designed to replicate the delayed reaction time that occurs when driving under the influence. The simulator hooks up to

a large projection screen so the audience can see just how hard it is for their sober peer to drive when the effects of alcohol set in.

At Hohenfels, Geysbeck repeatedly reminded the drivers and the audience that as hard as the simulator is, the driver is sober and able to logically try to navigate the physical effects of intoxication the machine simulates. When someone is actually drunk and no longer able to think logically, it is even worse.

“This gives a hands-on perspective. We focus on the consequences of drunk driving like tunnel vision, over steering, over compensating and diminished ability to multitask,” said Geysbeck.

As Geysbeck increased the driver’s alcohol level during the simulation, the driver’s reaction time decreased, causing them to steer the car more and more erratically, usually resulting in a collision or driving off the road.

“By the end there is no response to it at all so it feels like you have no control over anything,” said Spc. Mia Parker after her turn at the wheel.

Allowing Soldiers to experience firsthand the hazards of drunken driving, while still safe and sober, is what Wanda Stover, ASAP program manager for Hohenfels, Grafenwoehr and Garmisch, said made her interested in bringing SALT to Europe.

“I think about our Soldiers going over to fight, surviving that fight, then coming back and being hurt by something preventable like this,” said Stover, explaining why it is so important to her to stop Soldiers from driving drunk. “We’re not trying to get them to stop drinking, we’re just trying to get them to stop drinking and driving.”

Hohenfels offers students real-world work experience

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

For students at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels, getting that first high school job is not as easy as it might be for their friends in the United States. Working on the German economy is not an option for noncitizens, and while Hohenfels’ small-town atmosphere brings many advantages, a plethora of after-school jobs is not necessarily one of them.

Luckily, a dedicated high school faculty and USAG Hohenfels, along with AAFES and Defense Commissary Agency, have teamed up to provide students with valuable work experience while living overseas.

Career Practicum, a DoDEA-sponsored program at Hohenfels High School, currently has 18 students enrolled and working during the school day at locations throughout post where they gain hands-on work experience in a field of their choice.

Bob Delonge, Career Practicum teacher, said students begin learning about the workplace before they even make it to their job site. Students spend the first two weeks of the semester in the classroom learning about appropriate workplace behavior and assessing their own likes, dislikes, strengths and weaknesses.

The program is designed to not just give students something to put on a resume, but also to help them channel their interests into a possible career field, said Delonge.

He currently has students working at the elementary school, Red Cross, the fitness center, the auto skills center, the garrison’s Department of Public Works Environmental Division, the health clinic, the airfield and more.

Christina Robinson, a junior interested in art and Web design, decided to work at the Arts and Crafts Center where she said she is learning about new areas of art she had never encountered before, like using computers to create designs for engraving.

“This is really new for me; I really like it. I like to create. It has definitely made my perspective of art wider,” said Robinson. “And it’s good for my resume. Most people haven’t done this or don’t even know it exists.”

Danny Cavanaugh, a senior working at the commissary, also said he thinks his work experience now will be beneficial in the future.

“I think it will help a lot that when I go into the real world I’ll have some work experience. If I go to apply for another job they can call here and see how I was doing,” said Cavanaugh.

While Robinson and Cavanaugh both said they plan to attend college, they are not the only target audience of the program. Delonge said he also works with students with special needs to find them jobs that can help them develop valuable workplace skills.

“It’s great because it gives them practical

work experience. We work around their disability so they can find their strengths in the workplace,” said Delonge.

No matter what their plans after high school, Delonge said Career Practicum is just as valuable in helping the students learn about themselves as it is in teaching them about the workplace.

Delonge said that when students gain experience they frequently discover something they did not expect to like, or realize their dream career is not really for them. He is full of stories of students who changed their intended career path or college major based on their experiences in Career Practicum.

“It is exciting to see the changes as they find their strengths, or as they find what they don’t like.

“It’s an exciting thing when they come back and tell you about their experience,” said Delonge. “That’s what it’s for.”

After creating a design using a computer drawing program, Christina Robinson uses an engraving machine to transfer the design to wood.

Robinson, a junior at Hohenfels High School, works at the Arts and Crafts Center for part of the school day for Career Practicum, a program that matches students with work study positions throughout post.



American Indian culture, heritage honored

Story and photo by
KRISTIN BRADLEY
USAG Hohenfels Public Affairs

A week before Americans sat down to celebrate Thanksgiving, a holiday built around that favorite American tale about pilgrims and Indians, people at U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels set out to create a new scene, an updated one that would educate community members about the reality of American Indian life, then and now.

A group of volunteers along with the Hohenfels Equal Opportunity Office turned the Sportplatz into an American Indian village complete with a teepee and live, painted horses for the annual Native American Indian Heritage Month celebration.

Daphne Nash performs a traditional American Indian blessing using song and dance for Pvt. Eileen Weirich. The blessing for a warrior about to go into battle is meant to protect Weirich, a Hohenfels Soldier set to deploy soon.

We all come together not as tribes but as Native Americans in general, to stay strong and let the traditions live on.

Pvt. Eileen Weirich, A Company, 2nd Military Intelligence Battalion

“We want to share our tradition and culture with others,” said Erica Nash, explaining why she and her family put so much work into making the celebration a success. “This is something we don’t celebrate often enough, to put out there that there are Native Americans in the military.”

Visitors were treated to food samplings and cultural displays, along with singing and dancing performances around a large fire and handmade drum.

“We wanted to have the scenery and environment of a village,” said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Nash. “With all this set up we hope that when people came to see this it got them curious and interested to learn more.”

Spc. Kalie Jones said she has been involved in this event in the past, as well as helping with observances at other communities. At the Hohenfels celebration she performed numerous dances in her intricate American Indian dress.

“There’s a lot of stuff out there about what we are or are not. People think it’s what they see in movies. I like to put out the truth about what we really are and do,” said Jones.

One American Indian tradition that remains very relevant today, especially to members of the military, is to bless a warrior before he or she goes into battle.

After performing a dance for children, 14-year-old Daphne Nash used dance and song to bless a family friend, Pvt. Eileen Weirich, who will be deploying soon.

Weirich said these celebrations are important not just to teach others about American Indian culture, but also to remain united from within.

“Because each tribe is so small we need to all come together. We’re all from different tribes, me, Kalie, Mr. and Mrs. Nash, but we all come together not as tribes but as Native Americans in general, to stay strong and let the traditions live on,” said Weirich.

What’s Happening

Grafenwoehr/Vilseck Briefs

Korean worship services

A worship service is provided in Korean (Han-gul) for the community, Dec. 13 (2nd Sunday) at 1 p.m. at the Vilseck Chapel, Bldg. 219 (the small chapel). Fellowship will take place afterwards. Free child care is provided for both events. For more, call DSN 475-6583, CIV 09641-83-6583.

Christmas Bunko

It’s time for Christmas Bunko at the Grafenwoehr Community and Spouses’ Club monthly event. Join the group Dec. 15 at 6 p.m. for dinner, fun and games. All current and prospective members are welcome to attend. Event cost is \$10 per member. Must be 18 to attend. RSVP to gscmembership@yahoo.com by Dec. 11.

Single women’s trip

Attention Single Women! We’re heading to Regensburg to explore the “best Christmas market in Germany” in the Schloss Thurn and Taxis. Great food and shopping available in a beautiful and unique setting. Meet at Vilseck Chapel parking lot Dec. 18 at 6pm to caravan to Regensburg. Entry fee is 4.50 Euros. Sign up with Laurel Hoyt at CIV 0151-14991395 or e-mail laurel.hoyt@cadence.org. This event is sponsored by the Garrison Chaplain’s Office.

Extra savings on fuel

From Dec. 28 – Jan. 1, military shoppers using their Military Star Card can take advantage of 20 cents per gallon of fuel on these dates.

Boy Scout Tree & Popcorn Sale

From now – Dec. 20 on Saturdays and Sundays, Troop 261 will conduct its annual sale at the Main Post Exchange from 10 a.m.- 4 p.m. Tree purchases are by donation and Popcorn is at a set price. Don’t forget to get a tree stand. Contact Senior Patrol Leader Florian Sovine at CIV 09645-60-2530, or Scoutmaster Geoff Dewitt at CIV 01621-62-5322 for more or to sign up to assist the Boy Scouts.

Men’s Breakfast

There is a Men’s Breakfast every second and fourth Saturday at the Rose Barracks Chapel, from 8-10 a.m. in

Building 218 (the fellowship hall). The breakfast is sponsored by the Vilseck Protestant Chapel. For more, contact Brian Wrede at or 0170-8378-576 or brian.wrede@asamnet.de.

AFN Radio updates

AFN Bavaria knows how important it is to have inclement weather information as soon as possible about road conditions and school delays or closures. The AFN Bavaria The Eagle Morning Show now begins at 5 a.m. instead of at 6. If there’s inclement weather information, it will be announced throughout the day. Also, AFN Bavaria The Eagle has moved to FM 98.5 in Grafenwoehr and Vilseck. For more, visit www.bavaria.afneu-ropenet.net.

Estate claims

■ Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Sgt. Christopher M. Cooper of B Co., TF 2-28, 172nd Inf. Bde., should contact the court martial officer 2nd Lt. Erick Blackham, at DSN 475-9262, CIV 09641-83-9262 or e-mail Erick.blackham@us.army.mil. ■ Anyone having claims on or obligations to the estate of Pfc. Matthew C. Johnson of C Co., 2-28 Inf. Bde., 172nd SIB should contact the following summary court martial officer, 2nd Lt. Paul Petersen at DSN 475-8011 or e-mail paul.petersen2@eur.army.mil.

Antique Hunt Club

The Vilseck Community and Spouses Club’s “Antique Hunt Club” heads to a variety of destinations each month to find great European antique treasures. The club meets the first Tuesday of each month and car pool from the Vilseck Commissary at 9 a.m. and return by 3 p.m. For more, call CIV 0173-4531837.

AL-ANON

AL-ANON meets every Thursday at 7 p.m. at Counseling Center (downstairs), Building 206 (near CDS) in Grafenwoehr. For more, call CIV 0171-983-9151.

Zen meditation for everyone

Zen Meditation will take place at the Grafenwoehr Chapel annex every Monday at 5 p.m. All are welcome regardless of religious affiliation. Wear loose, comfortable clothing and arrive a few minutes early if coming for the first time. Chairs and cushions for meditation are provided. For more, contact Jody Dungay at jdungay@hotmail.com.

Hohenfels Briefs

Little Troopers Playgroup

Little Troopers Playgroup is an interactive and educational playgroup designed to teach parents developmentally appropriate play and help children improve social, cognitive and motor skills. It is open to all children from new born through 3 years old. Check it out Dec. 11 from 9-11 a.m. in the former CDC Annex, Bldg. 44. Due to the holidays, this will be the only session in December. For more, call Pam Koch, Exceptional Family Member Program coordinator at DSN 466-2083.

Rothenburg Christmas Market

Outdoor Recreation will take a bus to visit the Rothenburg Christmas Market Dec. 12. The bus will depart Bldg. H15/ODR at 9:30 a.m. and will return around 8:30 p.m. The cost is \$35 per person. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

Dresden Christmas Market

Outdoor Recreation will take a bus to visit the Dresden Christmas Market Dec. 13. The bus will depart Bldg. H15/ODR at 5:30 a.m. and will return around 10 p.m. The cost is \$65 per person. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

Elves workshop for children

Children of all ages are invited to come to the Elves’ Workshop and make a gift for someone special. The workshop will be open Dec. 15 from 2:30-4:30 p.m. at the Hohenfels library. For more, call DSN 466-1740.

Community holiday concert

U.S. Army Garrison Hohenfels and the Joint Multinational Readiness Center will host a Community Holiday Concert featuring the United States Army Europe Band and Soldiers’ Chorus Dec. 17 at 6 p.m. in the Post Gym. Parking will be available in the parking lots near Bldg. 1, the Health Clinic and the Community Bank. A shuttle service will be available from the parking areas to the Post Gym and return. The Band and the Soldiers’ Chorus is currently the Army’s third largest musical organization, the biggest outside of the United States, and the Army’s premier musical ambassadors in Europe. For more about the band, check out their Web site at www.band.hqusareur.army.mil.

Nuremberg Christmas Market

Outdoor Recreation will take a bus to visit the Nuremberg Christmas Market Dec. 19. The bus will depart Bldg. H15/ODR at 8:30 a.m. and will return around 10:30 p.m. The cost is \$35 per person. For more, call DSN 466-2060.

Drum lessons

Private and group drum lessons are available for youth ages 6-18. Registration is open at CLEOS through Dec. 28. Spaces are limited. For more, call the Central Registration office at DSN 466-2078 or 2080.

I love cookies story time

Children ages 2-5 are invited to hear stories and songs all about the tasty cookie. The program begins Dec. 15 at 10 a.m. at the Hohenfels library. For more, call DSN 466-1740.

Bilingual story time

Every week, children are invited to the library to listen to bilingual English/Spanish stories, rhymes, flannels, and songs at the Hohenfels Library, Bldg. 49. Registration is not required. Story times for children ages 1-2 are every Tuesday at 9:30 a.m. Story times for Preschoolers ages 3-5 are every Tuesday at 10 a.m. Story times for children ages 1-5 are every Thursday at 10 a.m. For more, call DSN 466-1740.

Introductory German course

Increase your marketability, raise your cultural awareness, and enhance your communication with the world. Learn the basics of the German language with Elementary German I, an introductory three-credit course offered

by University of Maryland University College Europe. The course dates are Jan. 19-March 11. Interested individuals should contact the Hohenfels field representative at DSN 466-4106 or register online at www.ed.umuc.edu. Registration will run Jan. 4-17.

Developmental screenings

If you have a child from 3-5 years of age and have concerns about their skills in any of these five areas: speech and language, personal/social, motor, cognitive, and self/help-adaptive, contact your local Child Find representative. If your child is birth to 3 years of age call EDIS at DSN 476-3321. If your child is 3-5 years of age call the Hohenfels Elementary School at DSN 466-2829. Brochures about Child Find may be picked up at the Hohenfels Elementary School. Child Find dates for the 2009/2010 School Year are Dec. 16, Jan.13, Feb. 17, March 17 and May 12.

Boy Scout Troop 303

Troop 303 will host a special Eagle Scout Court of Honor Dec. 13 at 2 p.m. at the Community Activity Center. Four Scouts will be presented with the highest rank in Scouting. All local Eagle Scouts are invited to share this special event with the Troop and their families. For more, contact Lt. Col. Yancy Wood, Scoutmaster, at DSN 466-4901 or e-mail yancy.wood@eur.army.mil.

Sergeant Morales Club

All noncommissioned officers are welcome to join the Bavaria-HTA Sergeant Morales Club that will meet at Mayer’s Deutsche Kantine Dec. 11 at noon. Anyone who is interested in becoming a member or who is already a member is welcome. For more, call Sgt. 1st Class Justin McClure.

Gift wrap fundraiser

The American Red Cross is sponsoring the annual Holiday Gift Wrap at the Hohenfels Main Exchange through Dec. 24. The hours of the booth will be in conjunction with the AAFES Main Exchange operating hours. A nominal donation amount is suggested in order for the gifts to be wrapped. Private organizations, units and FRG groups will man the booth and divide the donations among themselves. The American Red Cross receives a percentage for functioning as the sponsor and administrator. Shorten your to-do-list and support

your local community by having your gifts wrapped at the booth. Stop by the Red Cross office, Bldg. 10, if your unit, club or organizations has not signed-up and would like to.

Garmisch Briefs

Winter FMWR Trips

■ Brewery of the Month Club at Kaltenberg Ritter Bock, Dec. 12 From the Beer Purity Law of 1516, Weissbier, and the Hofbräuhaus, to the Oktoberfest, beer gardens and the “Royal Bavarian Academy for Agriculture and Breweries”, the histories of the Bavarian Royal Family and Bavarian beer go hand in hand. Join us at Kaltenberg Castle for a hearty meal and taste the “Beer of royal sovereignty.” Included in our samples will be the 2008 World Beer Award winning “World’s Best Helles, World’s Best Wheat Beer,” and the famous König Ludwig Dunkel. The truly brave will even try Ritterbock, the two-time “World’s Best Doppelbock” award winner. Cost is \$59, meal included. ■ Munich and the Third Reich, Jan. 8 & 10. Start with a video presentation and a geographical and historical orientation in the Pete Burke Community Center on Friday evening, Jan. 8 at 7 p.m. On Sunday, Jan. 10, we meet at the Garmisch train station just before 8 a.m. to travel to Munich, recreate the Bier Hall Putsch exactly as it happened in 1923, have lunch, visit the site of the Munich Accords (where Czechoslovakia ceased to be a unified country) and visit other places associated with the Nazi movement. ■ Prague, January 15-18 Prague is often on the top of everyone’s list of places to visit in the old world. There will be a “daytime tour” included in the weekend and tickets can also be arranged for those who want to see a ballet (Tchaikovsky’s Swan Lake is playing as well as a modern opera). Cost is only \$270 for the weekend. A minimum of 12 people are required before the trip can take place; a maximum of 14 people can attend. ■ Water Works, Jan. 23 If you thought “Water Works” is only a semidesirable property in Monopoly, think again. Water can be extremely therapeutic, relaxing, calming, exhilarating and lots of good fun at the Erdinger Therme. Transportation is \$15. Bring 32-34 Euros for the entrance fee plus extra for food and drink.

Advent season religious services schedule

- Dec. 6 – 2nd Sunday of Advent
 - Main Post Protestant December Potluck after Service
- Dec. 8 – Main Post Chapel Catholic Immaculate Conception mass at noon
 - Rose Barracks Chapel Catholic Immaculate Conception mass at 7 p.m.
- Dec. 10 – USAG-G UMT Christmas Party at Zum Goldenen at 6 p.m.
- Dec. 12 – Rose Barracks Chapel – SDA Christmas Luncheon at 12:30 p.m.
- Dec. 13 – 3rd Sunday of Advent
 - Catholic Parish Christmas Luncheon in Weiden, Zur Heimett at 1 p.m.
 - Main Post Protestant Christmas Social at Lohbachwinkel at 5:30 p.m.
 - Rose Barracks Christmas Concert and Dessert Fellowship at 6:30 p.m.
- Dec. 20 – 4th Sunday of Advent
- Dec. 24 – Christmas Eve
 - Rose Barracks Chapel Catholic Vigil Service at 4 p.m.
 - Main Post Chapel Protestant Christmas Eve Service at 5 p.m.
 - Rose Barracks Chapel Protestant Christmas Eve Service and Fellowship at 6:30 p.m.
 - Main Post Chapel Catholic Christmas Eve Service at 8 p.m.
- Dec. 25 – Christmas Holiday
- Dec. 31 – New Years Eve
 - Netzaberg Pentecostal Watch Night Service at 10 p.m. at Main Post Chapel
- Jan. 1 – Catholic mass at Main Post Chapel at 11 a.m.



Library Christmas Pajama Party!

December 18
Grafenwoehr Library
6-8 p.m.

December 20
Rose Barracks Library
4-6 p.m.

Join us for Holiday stories, songs, crafts and treats.



For more information contact DSN: 476/475-1740

What’s Happening

Garmisch (continued)

Winter FMWR Trips (cont.)

■ Neuschwanstein Castle, Jan. 24
Visit the most popular tourist attraction in Germany, Neuschwanstein Castle, along with the castle town of Fussen, the Wieskirche, and Ettal Monastery.
Meet at the Burke Lodge at 8 a.m.
Cost is \$39.
■ Weekend Tour to Venice, Jan. 29-31
View great art and architecture, the pigeons in St. Mark’s Square, gondolas, good places to eat and more.
In addition, we tour Verona, the Romeo and Juliet city with the great Roman Arena and a wonderful restaurant.
Cost is \$290 for the weekend. Plan to bring about 120-140 Euros to cover museum entrances, food, public transportation, souvenirs, etc.
For more on any of these FMWR trips, contact the Garmisch Outdoor Recreation Alpine Experts at DSN 440-2638, CIV 08821-750-2638.

Operas, concerts in Munich

•Wednesday, Jan. 6 - Hamlet
•Friday Jan. 22 - Giacomo Puccini’s Madame Butterfly
•Tuesday Jan. 26 - Tchaikovsky’s Fifth Symphony
Tickets prices for operas are 9-100 Euros and tickets to concerts range from 5-53 Euros. FMWR always runs a bus to the performance for the cost of \$12.
If the bus is not full of concert and opera goers, we have been known to take along some people who just want to drink some bier in the big city, catch a movie, or do whatever other things one does in a big town!

Ansbach Briefs

Education Center new hours

Now effective, Soldiers separating from the Army are required to make an appointment on Tuesdays and Thursdays to out-process. Separating Soldiers must know their separation program designator (SPD) code, which is obtained from the Transition Center, in order to be cleared through the Education Center.
Army Education Centers in Ansbach, Bamberg and Schweinfurt will provide limited only counseling and testing services by appointment only: Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m.
Testing services will be available only on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thurs-

days of each week with testing Soldiers having priority.
College proctoring services are based on space availability and funding.
On training holidays, Army Education Centers will only provide limited counseling services and will be closed on all federal holidays.
Questions concerning testing should be directed to your appropriate Army Education Center.
Katterbach: DSN 467-2817, CIV 09802-83-2817, Storck Barracks: DSN 467-4272, CIV 09841-83-4272

Hunting/fishing instructor
Family, Morale, Welfare and Recreation, needs a certified USAREUR hunting/fishing instructor to lead classes in Ansbach. The instructor needs to be ready to begin January 2010.
For details, call DSN 467-3225, CIV 0160-9890-5928.

Inspection closure
The Host Nation Liaison Field Operating Activity Maintenance Branch on Barton Barracks and the privately owned vehicle inspection station in Illesheim will close for the day, Dec. 11 at 11:30 a.m.
For more, contact DSN 475-6120, CIV 09641-83-6120.

Registration extended
Ansbach Sports and Fitness has extended its regular registration period for most sections of basketball, wrestling and cheerleading.
For more, contact central enrollment at DSN 467-2533 in Katterbach Kaserne and DSN 467-4880 on Storck Barracks.
In addition, they are in need of coaches for the following in Katterbach Kaserne: 2 bambino (ages 3-5); 1 peewee assistant (ages 6-7); 1 bantam (ages 10-12); and 1 junior (ages 13-15) basketball coach; 1 peewee and 1 minor cheerleading coach and some assistants for wrestling (ages 6-14).

Storck Barracks needs one peewee and one minor basketball coach and help with peewee and minor cheerleading. Certifications for coaching are next week.
Contact DSN 468-7866, CIV 0160-9890-58959 for full details.

Bulk trash pick-up
No bulk trash will be picked up for at least two weeks in the Katterbach Kaserne, Bismarck Kaserne and Bleidorn Housing Area. Residents are asked to not place any bulk trash by the side of the road.
This does not pertain to Storck Barracks.

AWAG conference
The Franken area of AWAG conducts a mini-area conference Dec. 12, from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m., at the Warner Barracks Conference Center in Bamberg.
This year’s theme is “Self Sufficient in the New Year” and will cover several varieties of topics.
Cost is \$25 and includes a light breakfast and lunch.
Reservation deadline is Nov. 23 and may be paid for by check or money order.
For more, call 0171-649-5728 or e-mail franken@awagonline.org.

Schweinfurt Briefs

CMRs open Saturdays
To accommodate holiday mailing traffic, community mailrooms and post offices on Ledward and Conn Barracks are now open Saturdays from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. through Dec. 19.

Christmas markets
The Schweinfurt Christmas market is open Mondays through Saturdays, from 10 a.m.-8 p.m., and Sundays, 11 a.m.-8 p.m. The market ends Christmas Eve with hours of 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Children’s Christmas play
The community is invited to the children’s Christmas play Dec. 20 at the Ledward Chapel beginning at 6:30 p.m. Refreshments will be available after the presentation.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-1370.

Protestant Christmas service
The Protestant Christmas service will be held Dec. 20 at the Ledward Chapel beginning at 9 a.m.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-1370.

Write a federal resume
For those who are job searching or updating their resume, attend Army Community Service’s class, Federal Resume 101, at the computer lab in Bldg. 206 on Ledward Barracks Dec. 22 from 1:30-3:30 p.m. Topics also include how to write a cover letter and thank you letter.
For more or to sign up, call ACS at DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Fine arts exhibit
The Boys and Girls Club of America presents a fine arts exhibit tomorrow at School Age Services beginning at 5:30 p.m.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-6974.

Asperger’s, autism support
Meet others living with Autism and learn about resources available at the Asperger’s and Autism support group Friday at Army Community Service, 10-11:30 a.m.
To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Smooth move seminar
Leaving the community? Army Community Service wants to help “smooth” your transition. Attend a seminar at Ledward ACS Dec. 14, from 9-11 a.m., to get tips on packing, shipping, moving with pets and more.
For more, call DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.

Transition, retirement
The Personnel Transition Assistance Center offers a pre-retirement briefing Dec. 16 in building 40 on Conn Barracks, from 9 a.m.-3 p.m., for those transitioning or retiring.
For more or to reserve a seat call CIV 09721-96-8683 or 8693.

POC training
Interested in becoming a point of contact for your family readiness group? Come to the POC training in the Ledward Yellow Ribbon Room Dec. 15 from 11:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Playmornning
Attend playmornings every Tuesday and Thursday from 10-11:30 a.m. at School Age Services. Parents with children ages newborn to 3 are encouraged to attend. Meet other parents, build your child’s social skills, play games, and participate in developmental activities.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

Lunch bunch
Do you want to get out of the house, make a few new friends, and learn where good restaurants are around town? The Army Community Service monthly Lunch Bunch is the perfect fit. Join Schweinfurt’s Lunch Bunch Dec. 17 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.
Sign up for the carpool or call to get directions to the restaurant at DSN 354-6933, CIV 09721-96-6933.
Experience a little of the German culture with an English-speaking guide to help you translate the menu. Children are welcome. Please bring Euro for lunch.

Night skiing
Throughout the month of December, Outdoor Recreation will take trips to Wasserkuppe in the Rhoen Mountains Saturdays from 5-11 p.m. for night skiing and snowboarding.
Cost is \$29 for transportation and equipment rental and \$19 if no equipment is needed. Lift ticket costs extra.
For more or to sign up, call CIV 09721-96-8080.

Fitness classes
Keep an eye out for the many fitness classes offered by the Finney and Kessler Fitness Centers.
Those interested can request circuit training and fitness equipment orientation in addition to the numerous classes held daily.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-8234 or 6735.

Irish pub
The Irish Pub at the Conn Community Club will be now open Fridays and Saturdays from 7 p.m.-2 a.m. Customers must be the age of 18 or older and must drink responsibly.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-6186.

BOSS trip
Check out the indoor Alpine Center and Skydiving Tunnel in Bottrop with the Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program, or BOSS.
The trip is on Dec. 18 with transportation departing at 6 am. Cost is 40 Euro per person. Optional skydiving tunnel costs extra.
Sign up now by calling CIV 09721-96-8476.

Schweinfurt homeschoolers
Parents and children of the Schweinfurt homeschooling community are invited to attend a monthly meeting the first Tuesday of each month at the Kessler Bowling Center from 1-3 p.m.
This is a great way for parents and children to share ideas and meet other

homeschooling families in the community.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-6057.

Destination Schweinfurt
Join Army Community Service for a day trip to the annual Christmas market in Nurnberg Dec. 18.
Transportation departs at 9 a.m. and returns at 4 p.m. Meet at ACS and bring Euros for lunch and shopping.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-6933.

BOSS Christmas dinner
The Better Opportunities for Single Soldiers program, or BOSS, is hosting a Christmas dinner Dec. 23 at Finney Recreation Center, beginning at 6 p.m.
For more, call CIV 09721-96-8476.

Wood shop orientation
Want to learn how to make your own picture frame or chess board? Come to the Wood ‘N Frame Shop orientation Saturdays from 10 to 11:30 a.m. The class is required to use the wood shop for any project.
Call to sign up at CIV 09721-96-6304.

Paintball thrills
Play paintball with your friends on Saturdays. The Conn Air Field is open for paintball every Saturday from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Bring your own equipment or find out about rental packages. Group discounts are available for more than 15 people.
Call Conn Outdoor Rec for more at CIV 09721-96-8080.

Learn ceramics or pottery
Want to learn a new craft? The Ledward Crafts Studio offers mold ceramics orientation every Saturday for only \$20 including all materials needed.
Pottery classes are also available from 2-4 p.m. using the potter’s wheel. Cost is \$35 plus materials for six sessions.
To sign up, call CIV 09721-96-6903.

Cosmic bowling
Enjoy an evening of cosmic bowling at the Kessler bowling alley on Fridays and Saturdays from 8 p.m.-midnight.
Dim the lights, turn on the disco ball, and listen to the music as you bowl your best game ever.

Open mic night Wednesdays
Every Wednesday night, Ramon’s, above Finney Fitness Center, will host an open mic night starting at 6 p.m for anyone interested. Come to sing, play guitar, read poetry, do stand-up comedy, or just have a good time.



USAG Schweinfurt

NFL SUNDAY FOOTBALL

Now through Super Bowl
6:30 p.m.-Midnight

Patio Bar @Conn Community Club

Big Screen Action
Drinks & Munchies
Free Post-Event Shuttle to Ledward

DRINK RESPONSIBLY



Open to age 18 +
Questions? Call CIV 09721-96-8476
DSN 353-8476





PUT YOUR EXPERIENCE TO WORK FOR YOU

The Air Force Reserve is offering part-time, and full-time opportunities for Aircraft Mechanics with excellent benefits, including choice of home base, education assistance, secure employment and competitive pay.

Choose your home base and you will not be transferred. Receive low cost TRICARE health insurance. Maintain retirement benefits. In most cases you can retain your rank. Specific jobs come with signing bonuses.

Continue to build close friendships, serve your country and participate in experiences unique to the military.

Accomplish extraordinary things while you achieve your personal goals.



EVERYDAY PEOPLE MAKING A DIFFERENCE

DSN 480-3940 • AFReserve.com/Prior

London

A cultural icon

by **SARAH FERGUSON**
Special to the Bavarian News

After about a 10-hour bus ride, and another hour-and-a-half on a ferry boat, the white cliffs of Dover appear, and you know you're in England.

Recently, I had the opportunity to visit London. Unfortunately, I didn't spot Robert Pattinson or any other celebrity; I missed them by only a couple days. The trip was great, though, and my only regret was I didn't have more than two days to fully experience London.

Two days is barely enough time to get your feet wet in the history that surrounds you or to experience the "New York City of Europe."

London offers much more to see and do than just driving on the opposite side of the road, taking photos in red telephone booths, and riding on the famous red double-decker buses.

An obvious site for starters is Big Ben,

which is not the tower, but the bell inside it.

Buckingham Palace also is something you won't want to pass up. Just don't expect to drive past it to get that beautiful shot of the entire front. Out of respect for the queen and to avoid congestion, vehicular access in front of the palace is restricted.

As I took the bus tour around all the main sights, a giant Ferris wheel, also known as the "London Eye," stood off in the distance.

The tour bus guide, who had quite a sense of humor joked: "Ah, and there is the London Eye. You know you can actually get married on it. By the time you reach the top, you're husband and wife, and it's all downhill from there."

Let's not forget the Tower Bridge that many people mistake for the London Bridge. (If you want to see part of an older version of the London Bridge, go to Lake Havasu City, Ariz. When the aging bridge was being replaced by a more modern version in the late 1960s, an American entrepreneur bought the bridge and had it reassembled

there.)

As our bus drove across the Tower Bridge, on both sides I could see the sunny, spectacular view of the River Thames. I could even see the London Eye for a second time. The Tower Bridge in London reminds me of a castle bridge from fairy tales.

No matter what you fancy, London has it all. If collecting items is your thing, hit the souvenir shops. They're not hard to spot, just look for merchandise with the Union Jack flag. The Hard Rock Cafe in both London and Oxford also features touristy souvenirs.

If you're interested in the horror stories of London, like Sweeney Todd and Jack the Ripper, visit the London Dungeon, which houses those and more stories of the unfortunate events that occurred in London. You'll know you're close when you see people dressed in costumes with bloody faces and a line of tourists that extends around the block.

Near the dungeon is a Krispy Kreme

kiosk that may give you flashbacks of home in the United States.

Their pastries even tempt you to leave the long dungeon waiting line just to sink your teeth into an irresistible cream-filled donut.

One of the best parts about London was that it reminded me of home.

New York City and London have some similarities, like sidewalks filled with business people at the end of the day. Even on the busiest streets were those foolhardy jaywalkers who tried to get across the street before that red bus careened toward them.

Through my short visit, the city captivated me and motivated me to learn more about British history and culture.

If you decide to visit England, it's the right choice because the country has so much more to offer than just fish 'n' chips.

Editor's Note: Sarah Ferguson is a senior at Ansbach Middle High School. She plans to attend Hampton University in the fall of 2010.



Above: The Tower Bridge, one of London's largest landmarks, stretches across the River Thames. The top portion of the bridge is a suspension bridge and the bottom portion raises periodically for the passing of ships.

Below: A pod at the very top of the London Eye, a giant Ferris wheel in the city, offers riders the chance to look over the entire horizon of the city of London.



Above: A view down London's Oxford Street shows busy crowds and double-decker tour buses within the historical backdrop of the city.

Background: The clock tower that houses the Big Ben is seen behind London city streets including an iconic red telephone booth.

Courtesy photos

Simple toys best for children

Games like stacking blocks provide opportunities for interaction with parents, problem solving for children

by **KRISTEN MARQUEZ**
Heidelberg MEDDAC Public Affairs

The holiday season is fast approaching, and that means decorations, parties and giving gifts to your special friends and family members.

If you're checking your list twice with gifts for the little ones this year, experts from the Heidelberg Medical Department Activity's Educational and Developmental Intervention Services (EDIS) urge you to also think twice about what you're giving to the smallest members on your holiday gift list.

Bigger, flashier and more expensive is not always better, especially when it comes to young children.

Armed with the right knowledge on what's actually best developmentally for children, you could have a successful, and inexpensive, holiday season.

"Traditional toys for children, such as letter blocks, crayons or anything that encourages parent-child interaction are always the best gifts you can give to children younger than three," said Allyn McGrath, Speech and Language Pathologist.

"A child can learn much more from building a tower out of wooden blocks than he or she can learn from just pushing a button that makes a light flash on an electronic toy," he said

"By building with blocks, for example, the child learns concentration as they're trying to stack the blocks or problem solving if the blocks topple," said Julie Brannon, Pediatric Occupational Therapist.

Gadgets with flashing lights and noises may seem like an easy way to entertain children, but the truth is that any toy that fosters interaction with a parent will be much better for the child's development in the long run.

"Children learn while they play, so the best thing that parents can do for the little ones is to offer toys and activities that promote learning," said Terry Giglio, Early Childhood Special Educator. "If you are using the TV/DVD with your child, this is a perfect opportunity to participate in your child's learning. If there is dancing on the TV/DVD, parents can demonstrate movements and imitate words together with their child."

Some of the toys recommended by EDIS staff include rattles, mobiles, teething toys, play mats and mirrors for infants.

Toddlers can benefit from blocks, stacking rings, ride-on toys and books, while preschoolers can expand to cooking and kitchen sets, pegs and pegboards or a train set.

The old-fashioned toys you grew up with in yesteryear, such as bubbles, play dough or a shovel and bucket for a sandbox, may seem

out of date compared to the whirling, noisy and bright toys on sale in department stores today. However, sometimes simpler is better because it requires more of the child than simply pressing a button to get a response.

These types of toys can also be much less expensive, and sometimes even homemade.

"It's really easy to find a recipe for play dough or homemade bubbles that your child will enjoy for hours," said Dr. Tim Adams.

Any time you're shopping for children, it's important to remember safety first.

Toys for young children should be well-made, shatter-proof, easily cleaned, not electric or battery-operated and checked frequently for safety.

According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children, when children play with hands-on toys, such as rattles, squeeze toys, balls, puzzles or beads, they're learning about how things work, and cultivating cooperation and problem solving skills.

Books and recordings help children appreciate words, literature and music.

Art materials foster creativity and build skills that lead to reading, writing and appreciating beauty in life, while construction items such as blocks, building sets and woodworking supplies are excellent tools for children to learn about science and numbers.

For more information about child development, recommended and appropriate toys and education, contact EDIS at DSN 371-2738, CIV 06221-172738.

a shot of advice

by **Lt. Col. STEPHEN LINCK**
BMEDDAC

Hello, I am Lt. Col. Stephen Linck, deputy commander of Nursing for the Bavaria Medical Department Activity. As the DCN, I am frequently asked questions about health care here in Bavaria.

Please e-mail brmc-pao@amedd.army.mil. if you have a health-related question. I will always answer your question via e-mail and your question may appear in the next edition of A Shot of Advice.



Linck

Q. How would I know if I got frostbite or not? For instance, after scraping ice off my car for about 45 minutes my hands were red and stung all day. Should I have sought medical care? Or is there something I can do afterward for myself instead of seeing a doctor? Seems silly to see someone for this, right?

Signed,
Frostbitten in Freihung

A. Dear Frostbitten, This is a really good question, especially during this time of year. It sounds like you did indeed have a cold injury. Cold injuries range in severity and what you are describing is called chilblain.

Frostbite is distinguished from chilblain because the injured area appears white and waxy instead of bright red. Frostbite is a more severe cold injury and occasionally requires surgical intervention of the injured area. Chilblain does not normally require medical treatment, but can get extremely painful.

The best way to prevent chilblain is to prevent your hands from getting cold in the first place. This may include wearing gloves or taking frequent breaks from ice scraping to warm your hands. Treatment for all cold injuries is gradual warming. Never warm injured areas with warm water, any type of heat pack, or with vigorous rubbing. Passive warming with warm dry air is the best way to prevent further injury to the affected area.

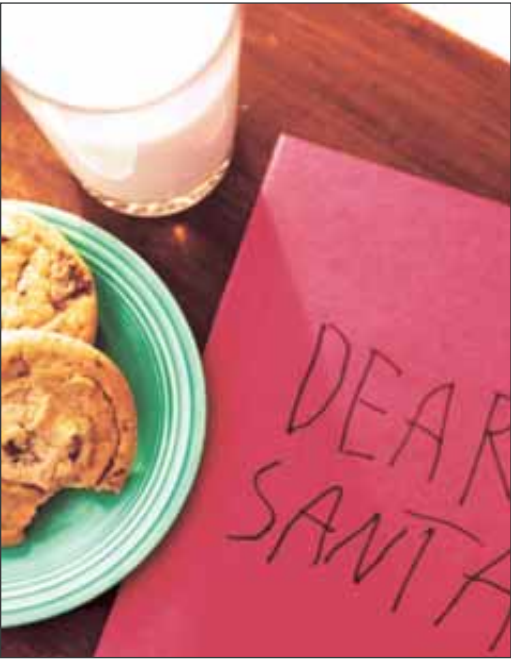
Q. My fiance routinely skips meals because he is too busy at work to eat. As a lifelong snacker, it is difficult for me to understand how he does not have time for a granola bar or 10 minutes to eat lunch. How can I get him the nutrients he needs to stay healthy? Should he use a multivitamin? Is there a certain type of food he should be eating?

Thanks for your help,
Snacker in Sulzbach-Rosenberg

A. Dear Snacker, Your fiance is a person after my own heart. Many of us keep extremely hectic schedules these days and lunch always seems like the easiest thing to give up. Your point is well taken, but sometimes I can't make enough time to go to the dining facility or food court, especially when the lines are long.

The key to staying healthy is what he keeps as a snack in the office. In Bavaria Medical Department Activity, the allure of candy and chocolate is everywhere, especially the time from Halloween to New Year's.

I personally find that I eat whatever is around, so I try to keep healthy snacks in my office like canned nuts, wasabi peas and baby carrots. They have a long shelf life and I can eat them while I work. Skipping meals is not a good long term solution for a hectic work schedule, but if he is going to skip, at least he can do so while helping to alleviate some of your anxiety over his diet.



Proper toys for young children

Infants: Rattles Mobiles Play mats Mirrors Crib toys Infant swing Teething toys Busy boxes Squeeze toys Suction toys for high chairs	Toddlers: Blocks Stacking Rings	Preschoolers: Blocks Beads, lacing Simple puzzles/mazes	Large Pegs and pegboards Shape sorters Ride-on toys Push-pull toys Stacking/nesting toys Balls See-and-say toys Books Sand/water play Cars/trucks	Shape sorters Stacking rings Pegs/pegboards Ride-on toys, trikes Various size balls See-and-say toys Books Drawing/coloring supplies (not coloring books) Simple train set Cars/trucks Musical toys Cooking/kitchen sets Toss/catch games Carpenter's set/tools
---	--	---	--	--

COMMENTARY

Hand washing not rocket science

National Hand Washing Awareness Week is Dec. 6-12

by **JENNIFER WALSH**
BMEDDAC Public Affairs

If there is one soapbox I love to stand on more than any other, it's the one about washing your hands. Sure, there are more noble causes to promote – and of

course, I support those, too – but I think hand washing reaches every level of society from the smallest tot to the president.

In fact, I'd be willing to bet that even cavemen rinsed their hands in a stream after a long day of hunting. There's just something about clean hands that makes you feel human.

Or for a germ fanatic like myself, it also makes me feel safe. If I were to pick up a slice of pizza without washing my

hands, all I would be able to think about would be the germs from the shopping cart I touched, the money I handled, and the pump I used at the gas station - now touching my meal.

Point being, my pizza would be infected. I would have visions of licking shopping cart handles instead of savoring my pepperoni.

I would suddenly smell gas fumes instead of intoxicating cheese.

I would pause, midbite, just to make sure it wasn't visibly covered in creepy, crawly germs. All in all, it would be a disaster.

Fortunately for me, and the rest of free world, someone invented alcohol-based hand sanitizer. If I can't find a bathroom, I can pull out my purse-size bottle of miracle gel and commence in the art of hand sanitation.

It's a beautiful thing. I think it's also probably saved my fiance's sanity. Nothing like finding soap and water for a germ fanatic when there isn't any to be found ...

Unfortunately for me, and the rest of the free world, not everyone seems to be on board with the whole "clean hands" thing. Instead, they treat their hands like a well-worn pair of jeans. Need to wash them? Nah, maybe next week, it builds character, right?

Uh, wrong. With kids, I'm a little more understanding. They're still learning the personal hygiene

process and may need some extra help. There's a great site that teaches kids about hand washing at www.henrythehand.com. I encourage parents and teachers to check out the site if they need help explaining the basics in a fun way.

Now with adults, I don't have much patience. By now, you should know that washing your hands is an essential part of good hygiene. Just went to the range and you're covered in grime?

Passed your pen around the room so everyone could sign in for training? Your hands look clean, but you haven't washed them since you took a shower this morning and now it's time for lunch?

These are all excellent opportunities to wash your hands.

Washing your hands helps prevent the spread of illness and disease.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, basic hand washing rules include washing your hands before preparing food and after handling uncooked meat and poultry; before eating; after changing diapers; after coughing, sneezing, or blowing one's nose into a tissue; and after using the bathroom.

Come on folks, it is basic stuff. Bite the proverbial bullet and buy a bottle of hand sanitizer for your purse or car; take time to lather up for meals; and don't sneeze into your hands.

It's just gross.



"Henry the Hand," a cartoon character used by schools and organizations to promote healthy hand-washing hygiene for children, is accessible by visiting www.henrythehand.com

Post office open Saturdays during holidays

Story and photo by

JOHN REESE

USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

The USAG Garmisch Army Post Office on Artillery Kaserne is conducting a test run of Saturday hours this December to help customers get their mail back to the United States in time for Christmas.

"Normally we're not open on Saturdays and the weekday hours are 10 (a.m.) to three (p.m.), but we opened it up the extra day and an hour earlier Monday through Friday until the 19th for the holiday season for outgoing and stamp sales," said Postmaster Willie Carter.

Carter and his crew worked Dec. 5, and will be open 9 a.m.-1 p.m., Dec. 12 and 19, to receive mail, sell stamps and provide the other services usually done during the week. The weekday hours were changed to 9 a.m.-3 p.m., with drop box collection at 2 p.m.

The new Saturday schedule is a test run to determine if customers want the APO to continue providing this service in the future during the holidays.

The holiday mailing dates to ensure that your mail is received in the United States before Christmas are: Dec. 11 for priority packages and first class letters and cards, and Dec. 18 for express mail; the deadline to send Parcel Airlift (PAL) mail was Dec. 4.

"There's a chance a package sent PAL will still make it before Christmas, but it's better not to gamble," said Carter.

Carter reminds customers that the USPS International Service Center in Dallas will close overseas military mail operations immediately after Christmas, and that on Jan. 1 the U.S. Customs and Border Protection will no longer have a presence at the facility.

"Effective now we can't send mail there," said

Carter. "It will be rerouted through Chicago."

The Garmisch APO will be closed Christmas Eve to Dec. 27, and again on New Year's Eve. For fastest service, call for an appointment to mail your packages, DSN 440-3713, CIV 08821-750-3713.

The Community Mail Room hours for package pick-up were modified earlier this year and remain the same, with the window open Monday-Friday, 9 a.m. - 6 p.m., closing at 3 p.m. on Saturdays and on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

The Garmisch APO and CMR walls are adorned with posters reminding customers what they can and cannot send according to U.S. postal regulations. Bill Johnson, director of the European Command's Customs and Border Clearance Agency, reminds those sending gifts back, especially meat and meat products, that many items found in Europe violate U.S. Customs rules.

"European delicacies like French pâté, German wurst, Spanish chorizo salami and Italian Parma ham are here for the buying and much sought-after in the States," said Johnson.

"Unfortunately, they can also carry the spores of Foot and Mouth Disease, a virulent livestock ailment eradicated in the United States."

Alcohol, even in candy, cannot be mailed. The same goes for fresh fruits and vegetables which could harbor pests. Cuban cigars are definitely a no-no.

One wall poster warns about mailing a popular chocolate egg found in most German stores.

"Don't be surprised if you get a letter from Customs and Border Protection saying they removed 'surprise' eggs from the package you mailed stateside," said Robert Szostek, U.S. European Command Customs and Border Clearance Agency Public Affairs. "The reason



Garrison employees Peter Krieg (left) and Karl-Heinz Pueschel liven up the exterior of the one-stop postal facility on Artillery Kaserne for the holidays. The APO, CMR and official mail room all occupy the same building.

is that Kinder-brand chocolate eggs and similar items are banned in the United States."

While many people probably think the eggs are innocuous, the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission believes the toy surprise hidden inside can pose choking and aspiration hazards to children younger than three years of age, said Szostek.

Garmisch postal customers can get more guidance on what they can and cannot mail from

the garrison customs office at the military police station or at www.customs.gov/xp/cgov/travel/ before they spend the time, effort and possibly a stiff fine sending verboten items.

"The best thing to do is have your box sealed and your customs form completed, and make sure the customs form is in detail," said Adam Miller, lead postal clerk. "If you'd like to keep your contents concealed so your present is a surprise, inform the postal clerk at the time of mailing."

AROUND THE ALPS



Teacher Eric Weddle leads his school choir in a medley of popular holiday classics to entertain the community immediately after the arrival of jolly old St. Nick at the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Tree Lighting ceremony, Nov. 30. The Garmisch Elementary-Middle School choir will perform again at the garrison's official holiday reception later this month.

Left: Shane and Carli Chambers wait to flip the switch to illuminate the garrison tree in front of the Pete Burke Center during the tree lighting ceremony. The youngsters are the children of Sgt. Michael and Kayla Chambers; Sgt. Chambers is a military working dog handler with U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch's Directorate of Emergency Services. About 140 community members bolstered by hot chocolate and cookies braved the cold and rain (and later snow) to watch the tree light up.



Garmisch ACS gets a new look, better serves patrons

In addition to upgrades, volunteers contribute, improve quality of life

by **JOHN REESE**

USAG Garmisch Public Affairs

The Army Community Service Center located in Building 203 on Artillery Kaserne has undergone a number of dramatic changes recently.

"One year on and going strong, the Garmisch ACS Center has been outfitted with all new furnishings and support equipment taking quality of service up a notch for our community members," said Doris Tyler, ACS director.

Army spouse Kayla Chambers, newest team member and Family Advocacy Program assistant, is the face of ACS, greeting customers with a smile as they enter, assessing their needs and connecting them with the appropriate staff member for consultation or services.

"With the upgrades to our ACS, we're better able to assist our customers," said Chambers.

Most noticeable upon entering is what used to be the ACS lobby. To streamline operations and make more office space available elsewhere as the garrison continues to grow, the ACS Yellow Ribbon Room/Computer Lab is relocating from the back of the building between the IACS and education offices to front and center.

"This change placing the Yellow Ribbon Room front and center will give customers direct access to all ACS staff members' expertise," said Tyler.

The ACS training room next to Tyler's office has also been improved, and was most recently used Dec. 2 by ACS program specialist Martila "Tila" Seals when she hosted the Exceptional Family Member Program Committee meeting. Seals joined the ACS team in August.

"The training room has already hosted several community educational events," said

Tyler. "The feedback has been very positive, receiving accolades for the convenience of location and function."

Kari Sharpe, who has been on the team since the beginning, has seen her duties expanded to provide additional services.

"I cover the Army Family Team Building, the Army Family Action Plan, and the Army Volunteer Corps programs," said Sharpe. "I also recruit community members looking to get involved in our volunteer program."

A good example of volunteerism is the Wonderful Wednesday program teaching children to ski. This is one of the longest running 'quality of life' programs in Garmisch for U.S. personnel, and it relies on volunteers organized by Sharpe.

"If we didn't have volunteer ski and snowboard instructors, we wouldn't have that program," said Sharpe. "The same goes for our other quality of life programs."

ACS has been busy since standing up and is on track to receive its first ever accreditation in a few months, said Steve Gauthier, Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation director.

"Our ACS staff has helped out local and visiting Soldiers who needed assistance while traveling away from their home posts with a full range of services, from cutting Army Emergency Relief checks for auto repairs to partnering with other garrison and tenant offices for the Holiday Assistance Program," said Gauthier. "More than \$14,000 in loans and grants were issued so far in 2009."

Before the garrison got its own ACS, services had to be provided from Stuttgart or Grafenwoehr, said Gauthier.

"It is a great relief to those in need that our ACS is ready and able to serve," said Gauthier. "We're here to help and we're glad to be of assistance."

Accreditation will be a big step for the Garmisch ACS as it ensures a commensurate level of quality services for the Army worldwide, said Tyler.

"We expect a Department of Army accreditation team to inspect us next August," said Tyler. "We'll be more than ready."

GO HOME !

Visit the U.S. Army Garrison Garmisch Web page, www.garmisch.army.mil, for up-to-date news, events, contact information and much more.



MPs train for real-world environment

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
USAG Ansbach Public Affairs

For the Soldiers of the 527th Military Police Company, who took over the Ansbach road commitment and law enforcement responsibilities Oct. 1, training continues.

In March, the garrison Provost Marshal's Office sponsored the first-ever joint training for the military police force with the local Ansbach German Polizei.

With a new rotation of patrolling Soldiers protecting Ansbach's streets and neighborhoods, the PMO decided to reinstitute the training. The training, which brought the new unit with more new Soldiers, and placed them in a more realistic environment, sought to teach Soldiers the proper rules of engagement under host nation guidelines.

With regulations somewhat restricting the MPs' duties off-post, this training helped define what those restrictions are, said Master Sgt. Delbert French, garrison PMO who helped coordinate the training.

"One of the problems we have is limited rights over the Germans on what we, as MPs, can and cannot do off post," said French.

"What this (training) does is allow us to assist the Polizei with incidents off-post, showing the MPs what they can and cannot do when off-post."

Trainers used the Better



German and Ansbach military police forces work together in Katterbach, Nov. 20, to train for real-world situations. U.S. MPs learned about off-post rules of engagement under the Status of Forces Agreement.

Opportunities for Single Soldiers facility to create a real-world club scenario.

The training benefited both the garrison and the surrounding community police forces.

"Most of the Soldiers we have here were fresh out of school and never worked law enforcement before,"

said French.

"We needed to teach them what the Status of Forces Agreement is and how it applies with rules of engagement in regard to levels of force they can and cannot use," he said.

In addition, French explained that because of the language barrier, MPs

need to have some kind of working knowledge of how each force will act and react.

"When we have to get together on joint missions, we want it to go as smoothly as possible and this training helps with that," he said.

And newer Soldiers, who may be unfamiliar with a combined

task force type operation, got to experience it firsthand in a more realistic environment.

"We are here for a common cause," said Pfc. James McLean. "I am brand new, fresh out of school, so this is really good training to see what we need to do for community law enforcement, especially with off-post incidents," he said.

McLean said the training will allow the MPs and German Polizei to be able to recognize each other's faces when there are incidents and become more comfortable with one another.

"It is good for both sides to recognize each others' mistakes and learn from them," he said.

Local police officers training with the Soldiers agreed.

"There are still a lot of American Soldiers in the Ansbach area and because sometimes issues break out between Soldiers and local residents, we have to work together with the MPs, to train with them, get to know them, their tactics, and work together as a group," said Annika Ellis, Polizei hauptmeister.

Combining forces allows for mutual respect and cooperation.

"This type of training not only goes to show our commitment to the community to police our Soldiers and assist their police in any needs they need, but builds trust and also fosters good relations between us and the Polizei," said French.

Storck Barracks Java Cafe opens for business

Story and photo by
RONALD H. TOLAND JR.
USAG Ansbach Public Affairs

At last. Opening to rave reviews and excitement, and after quite some time in the making, the Ansbach garrison opened its own Java Cafe.

With only a handful of the cafes in Europe, it is the sixth to open.

"It is something new and exciting to the community, in a quality home environment for all to enjoy," said Timeka Pearman, operations assistant at the cafe.

Opening at 7 a.m. daily, the Java Cafe usually has a line. Pearman said customers are eager to get that first jolt of caffeine for the day.

"We have customers outside the door at 6:50 a.m.," she said.

Pearman said Soldiers come in every morning before work, buy a drink and faithfully watch a favorite television program on the cafe's large screen.

"This represents a bond — a bond you miss being away from home," she said.

In addition to the coffee-based drinks, assorted pastries and snacks, the comfortable surroundings inside Apache Lanes Bowling Center on Stork Barracks, offers a little something more.

"We know our customers by face, know what they want to drink — a personal touch," said Pearman.



Rene Steudtner receives his first cup of coffee from Terry Chirinospacussi at the Java Cafe, located inside Apache Lanes on Storck Barracks during the cafe's grand opening, Nov. 23.

"We also offer juices for the kids and Wi-Fi, which a lot of the single Soldiers utilize," she added.

And when customers asked for it, the garrison delivered.

"It was a big-time request and a milestone

for the community," said Mike Richardson, facility manager.

He explained that customers demanded their caffeine after PT and since the cafe also offers food items, they can get a bite before Primo's opens he said.

Because it is a new operation, Richardson asked for customers to get involved with it and to present suggestions and new ideas to the facility.

"All input helps. We are here to serve you," he said.

"Java Cafe was one of the points brought up by the community at the manager's meetings and the Soldiers wanted it," said Richardson.

And they got it.

"It is really good coffee," said Capt. Jennifer Tillett.

"It is long overdue," said Capt. Teresa Noble. "Coffee is very popular amongst the military and having a coffee shop makes our life so much more ... it improves our welfare, kind of like an escape," she said.

Noble added that having the cafe also illustrates to the community that the garrison cares.

"It shows us more that Storck Barracks is getting support, we are not alone and are getting some of the new stuff, too," she said. "We're feeling the love now."

And nonmilitary customers love it, too.

"Everybody loves coffee," said Elijah Ham, Storck community manager.

Winter season, snow bring added responsibilities for renters

by **GINI SINCLAIR**
USAG Ansbach Public Affairs

The German Alps are famous for heavy snowfalls that give skiers a special delight each winter.

While German ski resorts are busy grooming the runs, those living in Katterbach and Ansbach are shoveling the white stuff from drives and sidewalks. According to officials at the 21st Operational Weather Squadron in Sembach, with the exception of Grafenwoehr, Katterbach gets more snow than any American military location in Germany. The average snowfall in Katterbach is 32 inches each winter.

"The largest snowfall in our records is 21 inches," said Herald Strauss, meteorologist/climatologist, 21st OWS. "There is a one-day total of eight inches of snow. And, because the plateau you are on is 400 meters above sea level, Katterbach gets more

snow than Ansbach.

"It's very windy when it snows and the snow tends to pile up in spots. The wind blows the snow and may cover half of the runway while the other side is clear," said Strauss.

All of this snow falling into residential areas means housing occupants are busy clearing off the sidewalks and steps around their homes.

Snow removal must be done in the morning, said Rudolf Leykauf, acting chief housing directorate for the garrison.

Snow removal also must be done on the weekends and holidays, he added.

"If the snow has been falling all night and is still coming down in the morning, you will need to get out and sweep away as much as possible," Leykauf noted. "It is generally the responsibility of the renter to make sure the walkways are clear of snow

and ice."

Leykauf suggests individuals renting on the economy check their contract to confirm their responsibilities regarding snow and ice removal. Each contract should say who will take care of the snow, he continued. In some cases it may be necessary to check with the city to find out exactly what your responsibilities are when it comes to snow removal.

"In a single family dwelling it is usually the responsibility of the resident," Leykauf added. "In some cases, there may be a caretaker whose job it is to take care of snow removal. But, it's between 80 and 90 percent of the occupants who must move snow."

Leykauf points out that removing snow early will help prevent the build up of ice. When the snow warms during the day a thin sheet of moisture forms and it refreezes at night. This

causes the buildup of ice on surfaces where the snow hasn't been removed. Once the ice has formed Leykauf said it may have to be chipped off the surfaces.

Removing snow can help prevent the buildup of ice, but if the ice forms Leykauf said applying salt may not be an option, as some communities do not allow the use of salt. In this case, the occupant may use sand to help break down the ice.

However, Leykauf recommends that anyone with ice on staircases or sidewalks use something to break the ice and remove it entirely, and consider another precaution, too.

"I recommend buying liability insurance," he said, "for anyone living on the economy. If someone is injured and it can be proven it was because the snow or ice was not removed, then you have a problem."

While residents are out with shovels clearing away snow the state

plows the main roads. However, according to Leykauf, this does not include inside city limits.

Each city is responsible for plowing its own roads, and many of the side roads may not get plowed at all, he said.

Ansbach plows the main roads within the city limits, but not the side roads.

Leykauf also recommends residents use the lightweight aluminum shovels for clearing the snow. Some of the shovels are heavy to begin with residents could work more efficiently without the extra weight the snow brings, he said.

One final note Leykauf mentioned for those living on the economy is to remember is they are responsible for snow removal in their area whether they are home or not. He suggests finding a good friend who will make sure the sidewalks and steps remain clear no matter the weather.

Family life consultants a ‘value added’

by **MARK HEETER**
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

It wasn't a Soldier, and it wasn't a family member. It had nothing to do with a deployment, but it had everything to do with providing help to people who needed it.

Hal Snyder, director of the U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt Army Community Service, recalls the first time he brought a Military Family Life Consultant (MFLC) to Schweinfurt in early 2006.

A teacher at the Schweinfurt Middle School had collapsed and died in the school's hallway, and Snyder convinced his leadership to bring in an MFLC to help the school community cope with the tragedy.

"These are licensed professional mental health practitioners in the States," Snyder said.

"I said this would be the value-added in a situation like that, just in the periphery, just for the teachers," he said. Snyder said the MFLC program exists throughout the Department of Defense at installations around the world.

The consultants remain in the overseas location for short periods of time, generally four to six weeks, to provide short-term, problem-solving consultations to anyone who needs them on a wide variety of issues, from personal to marital and from financial to parental, Snyder said. "There's really no side-taking" when consultants are asked to provide assistance, said Mike Rundell, who is the Army Community Service point of contact for the MFLCs at U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt.

"The reason it resides at ACS is because ACS is the go-to center for helping services in the community," Rundell said.

“They’re here for one reason ... Their job is simply be there for Soldiers and family members, civilians, teachers, whoever, as a free consultant for any life issues.”

Hal Snyder
Director, Schweinfurt Army Community Services

"They might be able to assess what the individual needs, and then ACS gives them the access to all those programs," he said.

"They're here for one reason, and they don't get multitasked," Snyder said. "Their job is simply be there for Soldiers and family members, civilians, teachers, whoever, as a free consultant for any life issues."

"No distractions, no other missions. It's wonderful," he said.

Schweinfurt generally has three MFLCs in the community, but, to support the deployment of the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne) and the return of the 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade (Separate), 10 are currently in Schweinfurt, according to Snyder.

The consultants work on a first-name basis only, maintain no written records, and can meet anywhere except a person's home.

They are also available to provide consultations to family readiness groups.

The MFLCs can be reached via telephone seven days a week, from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., at CIV 0151-1002-3585 or CIV 0175-379-4691.

Schweinfurt families reunite after a year of separation. During the deployments, Military Family Life Consultants offer professional and anonymous services as licensed clinical providers, assisting service members and their families with issues they may face through the cycles of repeated deployments.



Photo by Emily Athens

Schweinfurt homeschool group provides support

by **EMILY ATHENS**
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

Homeschooling is an option parents have when deciding how to best educate their children.

It is an alternative for parents and families everywhere, and perhaps more appealing to those of smaller military communities living abroad.

To support families in Schweinfurt who choose to homeschool their children, a group called the Schweinfurt Homeschoolers meets monthly where parents can discuss curricula, bounce ideas off each other, and simply mingle with others in a similar situation.

"Everyone homeschools for a lot of different reasons."

"This group is here so we can get to know each other, support each other, and for the kids to know other kids here who are homeschooled," said Myra Forrester, a homeschooling parent who, with the collaborative efforts of other homeschooling parents and Schweinfurt agencies, coordinated the Schweinfurt Homeschoolers group.

Forrester said the group meets the first



Tuesday of every month at the Kessler Bowling Center from 1 to 3 p.m., and plans field trips on a monthly basis.

Students from a homeschooling group in Schweinfurt learn about medieval armor during a recent field trip.

The homeschooling families of the Schweinfurt community plan monthly field trips and other outings to share curricula and enrich the education of their students.

Courtesy photo

"We've been to the castle in Coburg and have visited some museums in Schweinfurt. These trips offer a new perspective and they've been

really informative," Forrester said.

"Our family loves the opportunity to get together with other homeschoolers on these trips both for a great outing and also to encourage and be encouraged by others on this similar journey," said Heather Chandler, a Schweinfurt homeschooling parent.

"We've found many families have taken the path of homeschooling for a variety of reasons and each has something new or different to offer," she said.

The Schweinfurt Homeschoolers group currently hosts 12 families with children of all ages, and welcomes others to join.

According to Forrester, as the group grows and evolves, she consistently seeks ways to meet the needs of homeschooling families, and hopes to integrate physical education and German classes for homeschoolers.

"We are the mom, the teacher, the lunch lady," Forrester said. "It's a full time job. We want to be a help to those people homeschooling because it's such an important task. Everyone needs a net to catch them."

For more information or to join the group, e-mail chapksf@yahoo.com.

Blood drive to ring in new year with the gift of life



Story and photo by
EMILY ATHENS
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

A little can go a long way, especially when it comes to giving blood.

According to the Armed Services Blood Program (ASBP) Web site, just 80 units of blood can be used to help over 200 military members and their families, and for some, this means saving a life.

Two units of the Schweinfurt community, the 44th Expeditionary Signal Battalion and the 15th Engineer Battalion, recognize the significance of blood donation, and are sponsoring a blood drive Jan. 12, 2010, to ring in the new year.

"I'm a big believer in donating blood," said Kimberly Messer, family readiness support technician for the 44th ESB. "It's been a while since Schweinfurt has done anything so I'm happy to hear we could do this."

"Ever since losing a family member, I give as much

blood as humanly possible," said Spc. Robert Beggs, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 15th Eng. Bn., explaining how he donated bone marrow to a cousin until he died.

According to Beggs, the donated blood is shipped to a National Marrow Donor Program donor center in the United States where they look for a potential match for someone in need.

"We've had quite a few matches in Schweinfurt. And the donations stay in (the Department of Defense). It's to help out our Soldiers and their families," said Sgt. Denise Rudolph, lab technician at the Schweinfurt health clinic.

All ID cardholders are encouraged to attend and will be asked to answer questions to ensure they meet eligibility requirements.

Some disqualifying factors include having lived in Europe for more than five years, being pregnant, weighing less than 110 pounds, and having cold or flu symptoms. Traveling to certain regions may also exclude certain individuals from giving blood. For a complete list of eligibilities, visit the ASBP Web site at www.militaryblood.dod.mil/default.aspx.

The blood drive will be held Tuesday, Jan. 12, 2010 at Kessler Fitness Center from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Snacks and juice will be provided.

"Helping somebody live another day is worth it," Beggs said.

Amanda Williams, family member of 172nd Support Battalion, gives blood at the last Schweinfurt blood drive. The community is encouraged to donate blood Jan. 12, 2010, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., at Kessler Fitness Center.

It’s an Army family affair in Schweinfurt

Story and photo by
MARK HEETER
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

1st Lt. Andy Bryant and his brother, 2nd Lt. John Bryant, are separated by just more than a year in age – and only about 100 meters at their workplaces.

“They were 16 months apart in age, but they connected as if they were twins,” said their father, retired Army Lt. Col. Gary Bryant. “They were very, very close.”

Andy, 25, with the 1st Battalion, 77th Field Artillery Regiment, and John, 23, with the 9th Engineer Battalion, even ended their deployment to Iraq the same day, both returning to Schweinfurt Nov. 15.

“They arrived on schedule, but I was banking on them being a day or two late,” said Gary, who spent five days with his sons upon their return, despite having missed their separate welcome-home ceremonies that day by only a few hours.

Upon arrival in Schweinfurt in March 2009, John was originally slated to be assigned to a different engineering unit but asked to be switched to the 9th Engineers so he could be deployed with his brother.

“Scared mom a little bit,” Andy said, though Gary noted the Soldiers’ mother was somewhat relieved to have them serving together in Iraq.

The brothers, both of whom received



From left, 2nd Lt. John Bryant, his brother 1st Lt. Andy Bryant, and their father, retired Army Lt. Col. Gary Bryant are all smiles during their five-day reunion in Schweinfurt when the brothers returned from Iraq.

commissions through the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps at the University of Miami, did not have the opportunity to link up until they were preparing to return to Schweinfurt a few weeks ago.

“I tried to get down there but the mission wouldn’t let it,” said Andy, whose platoon was adopted by some members of the Fort Myers, Fla., Rotary Club, of which the elder Bryant serves as president.

“I got a lot of care packages while I was downrange, some that I knew well and some that I had never met before, who just wanted to help out,” Andy said.

“We wanted to be able to do something to show our Soldiers that we were behind them, that we support them, just to make life a little bit easier for them,” the retired aviator said, noting the differences between the Cold War Army in which he served and today’s Army.

“It is a different Army. When I was in the Army it was a conventional Army that trained and maneuvered in large formations,” said Gary, who retired in 1994.

“Now, platoon leaders and squad leaders are fighting the war. So the decision level where the rubber meets the road is at a much lower level of leadership than it was in the ‘70s and ‘80s and ‘90s,” he said.

His sons, both platoon leaders during their deployment, learned this firsthand in Iraq.

“What I would tell a lieutenant heading down there for the first time is listen to your NCOs who have done it two or three times,” John said of noncommissioned officers with whom he has served.

“The NCOs here in Germany, most of them have been here for three or four or five years, maybe more. They’ve had multiple deployments not only in the Army but in this unit. So my advice would be to listen to them, take their advice, they’ll take care of their officers,” John said. “That’s what mine did.”

Commander reflects on Engineers’ return

The second in a two-part series dedicated to the 15th Engineer Battalion’s redeployment from Bulgaria

by **EMILY ATHENS**
USAG Schweinfurt Public Affairs

The 15th Engineer Battalion, based in Schweinfurt, returned late October from a four-month deployment to Bulgaria where it linked with Joint Task Force – East, a European command initiative that coordinates annual training rotations in Bulgaria and Romania.

Soldiers built schools, repaired facilities, cleaned the grounds and organized several other relief-type projects to include raising money and donating numerous items in support of the Humanitarian Civic Assistance (HCA) mission.

In addition, select members of the 30-person team were assigned to command the task force to ensure their own Soldiers and other participating units received the training they set out to accomplish.

“We manned the primary staff roles and supplemented the HCA construction projects,” said Lt. Col. David Hurley, commander, 15th Engineer Battalion, who commanded a forward element of the task force in Bulgaria.

According to Hurley, his team formed the nucleus of JTF-E during its

four-month deployment, supporting the training efforts of a Tennessee National Guard unit and troops from the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment.

“We set up ops, performed training rotations for units, and interacted with the host nation in terms of being a good visitor to Bulgaria,” Hurley said. “We were working to improve our cooperation and interoperability with our NATO partner and help them increase their training capacity while building relationships.”

“We also had our engineers manning the (Directorate of Public Works). We took our electricians, plumbers, and carpenters to support the HCA mission. Those guys basically performed the role of DPW, so they were doing all the work orders that supported both the staff and the training unit,” he added.

Furthermore, because of the noncombat environment, Hurley said Soldiers had the opportunity to explore the surrounding areas in Bulgaria, and interact with local communities, including towns such as Medven, Sungulare, Padarevo, Zimnitsa and Mokren.

“We had a lot of very positive engagements with Bulgarian civilians,

local officials and members of their military, so it was successful not just professionally,” Hurley said.

All in all, whether building schools, providing supplies, or performing training exercises, 15th Eng. Bn. Soldiers built relationships that will advance the efforts of JTF -E in continuing a partnership with Bulgaria while conducting joint military operations.

Lt. Col. David Hurley (right), commander of 15th Engineer Battalion out of Schweinfurt, cuts a ribbon with U.S. Navy Seabees and Ivan Sinigerov, the mayor of Padarevo, officially marking the reopening of the Vela Peeva kindergarten. The building and playground were renovated by members of the Bulgarian Land Forces, U.S. Navy and Army, and a local contractor, supporting Joint Task Force-East’s Humanitarian Civic Assistance mission.

Photo by Maj. Mannoel Gorospe



’Tis the season



Photo by Emily Athens

Lt. Col. Leticia Sandrock, chief nurse at the Schweinfurt Health Clinic, administers the FluMist vaccine to Lynda Pontius while Maj. Vernell Jordan, chief, Army Public Health Nursing, observes. FluMist vaccinations are still available for the seasonal flu at the Schweinfurt Health Clinic. Community members can visit the immunizations clinic from 8-11:30 a.m. and 1-3:30 p.m. on a walk-in basis. For questions regarding the vaccine, call CIV 09721-96-6378.



Photo by Mark Heeter

Welcome home

After numerous welcome home ceremonies, the community finally welcomed home its last group of incoming Soldiers of the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate), Blackhawks, Nov. 23, after their yearlong deployment to Iraq. Friends, families and loved ones gathered to greet the groups with balloons, signs, and open arms.



Nearly 600 Soldiers, family and community members gathered for the annual tree lighting ceremony. The Grafenwoehr PX parking lot basked in the radiance of the brightly colored lights covering the Christmas tree.

Germans, Americans share holiday traditions

Continued from Page 1

demonstrate the excellent German-American friendship we enjoy here in our garrison.”

Additionally, Sorenson thanked both American and German Soldiers who are deployed throughout the world and away from their loved ones during this special time.

Grafenwoehr Mayor Helmuth Waechter then greeted the crowd and attested to the warmth of the Grafenwoehr communities.

“Christmas ... is first and foremost a family event,” said Waechter. “That’s one of the reasons why we meet here every year under the Christmas tree, because that is what we are and what we want to continue to be; a large family, united by friendly solidarity.”

One thing not lost on the crowd was the benevolence of the German community.

“Events like this remind us that although we are a different race and creed, we are still one community, one family,” said Chief Warrant Officer II David Lance, 52nd Aviation Regiment.

Lance’s 15-year-old son, David Jr., agreed.

“It’s a symbol of friendship and togetherness,” he said.

Following the guest speakers, the Netzaberg Elementary and Middle School choirs entertained the crowd with traditional Christmas carols.

Although the American and German Christmas traditions differ slightly, the holiday spirit remains the same. Christmas is a time of fellowship that transcends cultural barriers.

Brig. Gen. Steven Salazar, commander, Joint Multinational Training Center, faced the crowd a few minutes shy of the main event and gave his own account of the holiday season, focusing

on giving. Salazar thanked Soldiers and their families for their constant sacrifice stating they “give so much,” and praised the ongoing support of the German community.

For 9-year-old family member Camille Williams, Salazar was right on target.

“Christmas is all about giving,” she said.

“It’s about Jesus too,” piped in Williams’ younger sister, 6-year-old Kendra.

“It’s about being nice to everyone,” said 10-year-old Conli Booth, offering an additional piece of advice. “That gets you presents.”

Another tradition shared by the two cultures is the lighting of the Christmas tree to commence the yuletide season.

With a flip of a switch, the Main Post PX parking lot blazed in the radiance of the brightly colored lights covering the 100-foot spruce. A ripple effect of “oohs” and “ahs” followed and carried the crowd happily into the Christmas season.

“This event always makes Christmas official,” said family member Kellie Neubauer. “We started a tradition in 2007 and have come here every year since as a family.”

Neubauer’s four children, Adam, 11, Drake, 7, Blake, 6 and Chloe, 4, danced around her, clutched warm cups of cocoa and waited patiently for a visit from Santa Claus and St. Nikolaus.

“He’s coming soon,” said Chloe, “with presents.”

With the recent return of more than 1,000 Soldiers of the 172nd Infantry Brigade, Christmas will be brighter for many military families in the community.

“Christmas is all about family,” said family member Kelly Thomas. “Now that we are all together again, it will be a very Merry Christmas.”

Shoplifters face penalties

Continued from Page 1

“Instead of an MP (military police officer) going to the school and talking to the students, we wanted to show them how the cameras worked in person so that maybe they would be less likely to shoplift,” said Lt. Col. Shawn Driscoll, provost marshal, U.S. Army Garrison Grafenwoehr.

For minors, shoplifting is an “indicator of other risky behaviors such as substance abuse,” said Beiter. A charge of larceny for a minor will result in a referral to Adolescent Substance Abuse Counseling Services, which will then conduct a total assessment of the child to determine if he or she is at risk.

Juveniles will be required to perform 20 hours of community service for their first offense, and adults, 50 hours. Both the ASACS referral and community service hours are voluntary, however, if the perpetrator fails to perform either, he or she could face a more serious punishment for second offenses such as being barred from the installation or an Early Return of Dependents.

AAFES has its own procedures for punishing shoplifters, as well. After a police report is filed, AAFES assesses a \$200 civil recovery fee to “recoup administrative costs such as stopping the shoplifters, paying for cameras and loss prevention,” said Gil Charette, loss prevention manager for AAFES.

If the stolen item is damaged or otherwise not

sellable, the cost of the item will be seized added to the civil recovery fee. In addition, AAFES will revoke identification card privileges for six months for the first offense.

Not only does this mean offenders are prohibited from purchasing items from the PX, but they may not be allowed on AAFES facilities such as the food court, shoppette and movie theater.

Should an individual have privelages revoked, setting foot onto an AAFES facility will warrant a criminal trespassing charge, which is considered a second offense and could incur more serious consequences such as an Early Return of Dependents action.

A second charge of larceny will result in the suspension of AAFES privileges for one year and 50 community service hours for minors and 75 for adults. A civilian misconduct charge such as larceny will appear on a background check for adults and juveniles.

A larceny charge on a person’s record could prevent a student from getting a summer job, or an adult from landing that job on post.

Charette said shoplifters increase prices of goods because retailers have to make up for the losses that larceny creates.

Shoplifting harms everyone, especially in the military community, since AAFES profits help fund Family and Morale, Welfare and Recreation programs.

Efficient use of resources begins with the individual

Continued from Page 1

programs across our installations do not suffer. We will maintain our full support to Life, Health and Safety programs, the Army Family Covenant and those services that prepare our Soldier and their Families for deployment in support of the Army’s Force Generation model.

These are non-negotiables that will remain fully funded. This is our commitment; we will not depart from it. However, there will be other installation services that will clearly be reduced.

We have grown accustomed to some very high levels of service across the board in recent years and we all need to be forthcoming with the expectation that things will be different in some areas. Help manage this expectation across your garrisons. Educate everyone as to which changes they can expect to see. A simple explanation can go a long way to helping understand the changes some of our installation services will undergo.

Across the Army’ installations, we can do much to help ourselves by becoming better stewards of our resources. It starts with the individual; everybody has a role. Simple things like turning the lights off, powering down your computer at night, driving tactical vehicles instead of TMP vehicles or conducting

a VTC instead of traveling to a distant site unnecessarily all save money - and no savings is too small to forego.

Commanders and leaders across the installation have a key role and are responsible for the efficient use of our resources. Costs should be an inherent consideration in your every decision. We too often marginalize this key factor in making good, resource-informed decisions but we can no longer afford to do so.

As I travel throughout the Army community, I carry the message that we can do business smarter and more efficiently without sacrificing the quality of service that our Soldiers and their Families so richly deserve.

I challenge everyone to do the same; to work together to ensure that those key installation programs that mean so much are well resourced and operated; that we do away with wasteful and unnecessary spending.

Every person - whether you are a Soldier, Family member, one of our great DA Civilians or a contractor serving our Army - is needed and can make a difference.

Ask yourself if you are doing the right things and then, are you doing them right. Doing things right means doing them in the most cost efficient way without sacrificing effectiveness.

CHRISTKINDLMAERKTE							
<u>Baden-Baden</u> Until Dec. 27 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	<u>Heidelberg</u> Until Dec. 22 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	<u>Mainz</u> Until Dec. 23 Mon.-Fri. 10 a.m. - 8:30 p.m. Sat. 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Sun 11 a.m.- 9 p.m.	<u>Munich</u> Until Dec. 24 Mon. - Fri 10 a.m - 8.30 p.m Sat. - 9a.m - 8.30 p.m Sun. - 10 a.m - 8.30 p.m Dec. 24 - 9 a.m - 2 p.m	<u>Nuernberg</u> Until Dec. 24 Mon. -Thu. 9:30 a.m. - 8 p.m. Fri. - Sat. 9:30 a.m. - 10 p.m. Sun. 10:30 a.m.- 8 p.m.	<u>Rothenburg ob derTauber</u> Until Dec 23 Mon. -Thu., Sun. 11 a.m. - 7 p.m. Fri. -Sat. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.	<u>Speyer</u> Until -Jan. 6 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Closed Dec 24, 25, 26 and Jan 1	<u>Stuttgart</u> Until Dec. 23 Mon. - Sat. 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. Sun. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.
<u>Bernkastel-Kues</u> Until Dec. 20 11 a.m. - 7 p.m.	<u>Kassel</u> Until Dec. 23 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.	<u>Mannheim</u> Until Dec. 23 Mon.-Fri. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Sat. 11 a.m. - 10 p.m. Sun. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.	<u>Regensburg</u> Until Dec. 23 Sun. - Wed. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m Thu. - Sat. 10 a.m. - 9 p.m.	<u>Ruedesheim</u> Until Dec. 23 Mon. -Thu. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Fri. - Sun. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	<u>Saarbrücken</u> Until Dec. 23 Sun. -Thu. 11 a.m. - 9 p.m. Fri. - Sat. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.	<u>Trier</u> Until Dec. 22 Mon. -Sat. 10 a.m. - 8 :30 p.m. Sun 11 a.m. - 8 :30 p.m.	
<u>Koeln</u> Until Dec. 23 11 a.m. - 9 p.m.	<u>Koblenz</u> Until Dec. 22 Mon.-Thu. 10 a .m. - 8 p.m. Fri., Sat. 10 a .m. 9 p.m. Sun. 11 a .m. - 8 p.m.	<u>Germany</u> Nov. 27 – Dec. 20 Mo-Fr 1400-2000 Sat-Sun 1100-2000	<u>Garmisch</u> Until Dec. 23	<u>St. Wendel</u> Until Dec. 13 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.	<u>Weiden</u> Until Dec. 23 Mon. - Fri., 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Sat. 9 a.m. - 8 p.m. Sun. 11 a.m. - 8 p.m.		
<u>Deidesheim</u> Until 20 Dec. Weekends only			<u>Bamberg</u> Until Dec. 23				
<u>Schweinfurt</u> Until Dec. 24 Mon - Sat 10 a.m. - 8 p.m. Sun 11 a.m. - 8 p.m. Dec. 24 Dec. 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.	<u>Landau</u> Until Dec.20 11 a .m. -8 p.m.						